





"Te doy las gracias, Virgencita de Guadalupe, porque me permites ser el mismo de siempre, aunque, eso sí, no se si te has fijado, Santa Patrona, mucho más tolerante hacia lo que no entiendo ni comparto, capaz de serte fiel a tí, que eres la nación, aunque ahora yo sea pentecostal, testigo de Jehova, adventista, bautista o mormón, decidido a no cambiar aunque mi aspecto sea tan distinto, y aunque de este radio gigantesco, ghetto blaster, creo que lo llaman, se desprenden las melodías que nunca pense que me apasionarian. Te lo juro, Virgencita, soy el mismo de siempre, aunque ya ni en el espejo me reconozca."

Taller de Arte Fronterizo

1.984-1.991

Una documentación continua de
siete años de proyectos de arte interdisciplinarios
sobre asuntos de la frontera de Mexico
con Estados Unidos.

Border Art Workshop

1984-1991

A continuing documentation of
seven years of interdisciplinary art projects
surrounding issues of the
U.S./ Mexico border.



Acknowledgements

Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE) is an artists' organization committed to presenting work which reflects current aesthetic, political, critical and theoretical issues. As one of the most important goals of our mission is to act as a catalyst for continuing critical discussion, we are tremendously pleased to have had this opportunity to work alongside the Border Art Workshop/Taller de Arte Fronterizo in presenting the installation and performance **Destination L.A.** which continues their longstanding dialogue about the personal and political interrelationship between the U.S. and Mexico. As an organization based in Los Angeles, LACE shares a deep concern about the interrelationship of the cultures of Mexico and the United States. Central to the issues explored in this installation is the fact that Los Angeles is a magnet for people seeking opportunity. What reasons, real or imagined, cause these people to choose Los Angeles as their destination? What are the implications and ramifications of this influx? Why are there so many obstacles attempting to prevent this migration? LACE is pleased to offer our audience the opportunity to join in this discussion.

With the 21 year history of the Centro Cultural de la Raza and the 8 year history of the Border Art Workshop/Taller de Arte Fronterizo it is important to acknowledge the ongoing relationship between the two groups. Art and politics are closely intertwined and are not easily separated. BAW/TAF has, and continues to act as a crucible in which U.S./Mexico border issues are dealt with on an international level. BAW/TAF has been, and continues to be, an integral part of the Centro.

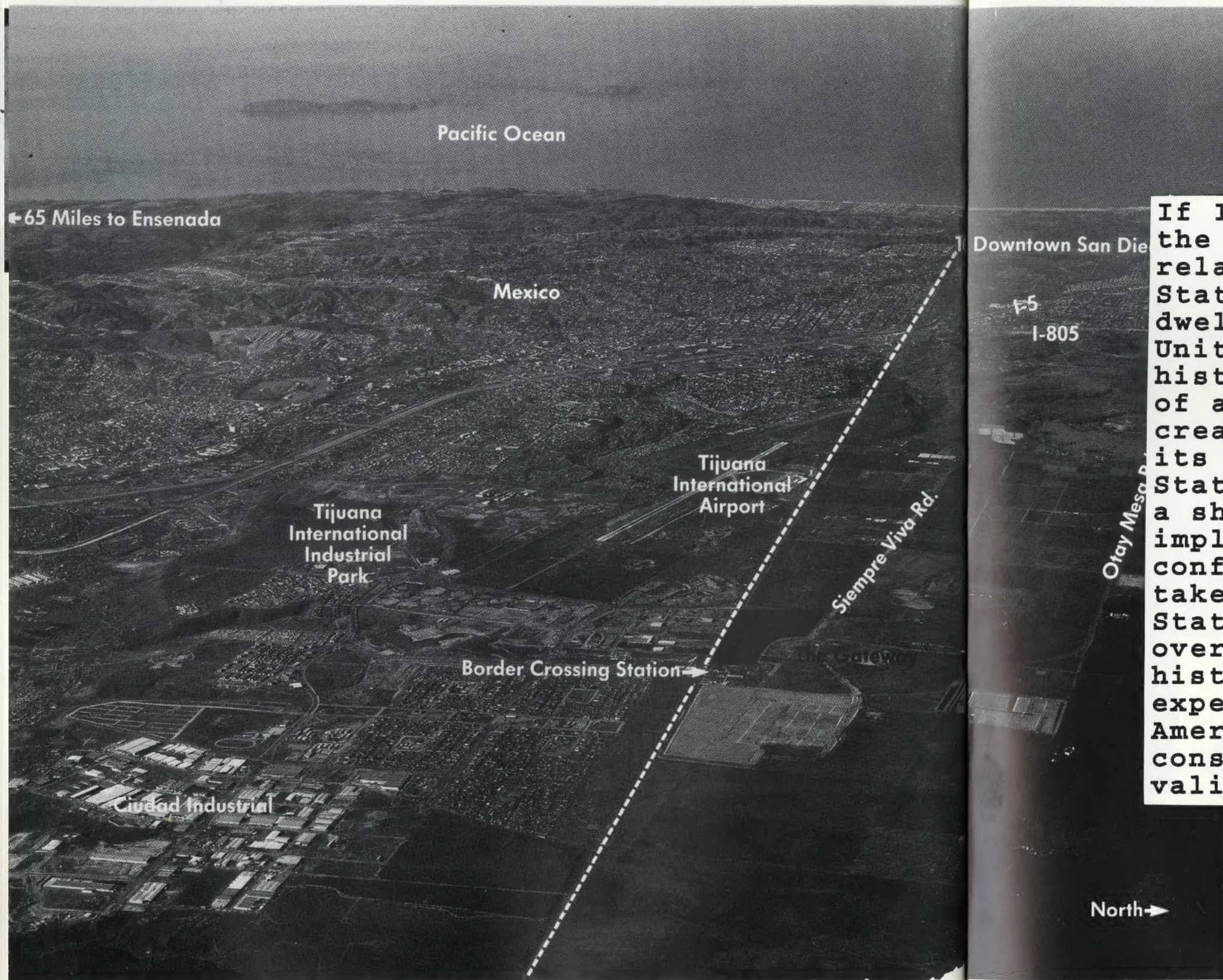
Patricio Chavez
Interim Director and
Visual Arts Curator
Centro Cultural de la Raza
November, 1991



Edgardo Reynoso
Manuel Mancillas
Juan Carlos Toth
Susan Yamagata
Michael Schnorr
Kirsten Aaboe
Carmela Castrejón
Narcisso Argüelles
Stephanie Heyl
Jorge Peña



VECINOS



Downtown San Diego

5
1-805

Siempre Viva Rd.

Otay Mesa

North →

If I had chosen to venture north of the border in my chapters (on the relationship between the United States and Mexico), I would have dwelt on the difficulties that the United States' lack of a sense of history, due to the virtual absence of any common national history, creates for nearly every nation in its relations with the United States. A slender history makes for a short memory, which in turn implies that every negotiation, conflict, tension, or disagreement takes place in a vacuum: the United States' interlocutors must start over every time. There are no historical precedents, and the experience of the past (for most Americans) is not a relevant consideration or, less still, a valid argument. *Jorge Castañeda*

volé de palmo a palmo
atacado de arlequines enmascarados
hacia un campo de verano
Circo el Bochinche Sincopado
buscando un paisano peregrino
de alas fugaces y de un graznido milenario
lo encuentro trepado en un manzano
estemeándose los quintos con el pico
lo encuentro doblándose los soles
pichando montones de dolores
lo encuentro maniobrándose los aires
esprayándose sobrio los sudores virulentos
lo encuentro achicopalado por la nostalgia
con el pecho picoteado de bichos
ajenos pero ansina ya muy plaqueados
y de entre chiflidos cabuleros
en la nota destemplada
me relata de sinsabores y del gozo de los frijoles negros
en un volado me reta a que me doble las plumas
a que me sacuda el mondongo y las garras ociosas
pa'que sepas el sentir de mi trova
echate esta redoba a la maceta
después una cumbia en el sol bemol
luego le arremetemos a un huapango
en seismil por ocho
el acordeón fragua soplándose los huracanes
a las musas traviesas de los lagos norteros
donde los peces se mueren de hambre
y el paisano ahuirote es amaestrado en invisibilidad
mientras que en el meinstrit escuer
yanquis on parade
yellow ribbons tightly bound in bunting
rattling drums to a souza march
and the kinder gentler wave
of friendly fachostis xanthocroid amerrikanus
una flota de bolillos rednequianos-goosestepping-
coreando celebrando su victoria-cuelliarguidos-
"La Marchita Final" en Re sometido y La grimosa
la silueta del ahuirote se aparece en las aguas
un trino repica el falsetto dentro del tronco del olmo
y la melodía me dice, así... no le des mente paisano...
avientese otra helodía morena...
afiné bien su instrumento empatese conmigo
pongale ganas en el solo
y no se le olvide el remate para seguir iguales
entonces agitando una leve aplicación* de vientos cálidos
con el clarín en el pico y las alas afiladas
un resolplido de una ráfaga helicónica en fri fol
me aterrizá cerca del mar revuelto de mis pasados remotos*

*notas aplicadas del cabrera



Sergio was a farm worker . He created abundance but he knew hunger. His life was lived according to the principle , "bread for myself is a material question: bread for my brother is a spiritual question." He was a thinker with a strong appetite for justice. His integrity was so fierce that he could not make even reasonable compromises. He was a poet who carved his works not on paper but directly into the pebbly soil hereabouts that permits the vines to prosper. He was an educator: he taught more than one generation of young people the morality and, yes, the essential joy of productive work.

During a work career that spanned more than 40 years of hardest physical labor — prodigious hard labor, let's be honest—Sergio volunteered his youth and his strength to ensure successful harvests . . .for others. He loosened and cultivated the stony soil; he drove tractor; worked with hand tools; he planted, weeded, sprayed, harvested; he drove posts into the stubborn ground each year to sustain next season's wealth of vines. And those vines grew luxurious thanks to his labors . What he received in return is a matter of conjecture.



Economic misery struck down this good and selfless man on New Year's Eve 1988/9. But Sergio lives and breathes in every green leaf, in every quietly germinating seed below the ground of Chautauqua County, in every flake of snow that flutters to earth; he lives and breathes in every rebirth of a curled-up tendril, in every springing to life of a wild-flower, in every cawing of a migratory bird.

The reason neither Avery Fisher Hall nor Cornell University nor Daniel Reed Library nor for that matter the NY State Thruway bears his name—nor are there fellowships in architecture or astronomy named for Sergio although he loved and studied the constellation Orion more passionately than any one of us—is that he was on hands and knees picking tomatoes; he was pulling brush or harvesting grapes while others were sitting in classrooms.

We undersigned Dunkirk City residents and others who loved him now petition the City of Dunkirk to celebrate and commemorate Sergio Rosario—and in so doing do itself honor—by renaming for Sergio the stretch of universe currently designated Beaver Street. We ask that this city street that became in a sense Sergio's ultimate homeland during his residence on earth and that afforded him so true a measure of joy and human companionship be now and henceforth known as AVENIDA SERGIO ROSARIO.



STRETCHING THE BORDERS

I knew it stretched the other way, that the U.S. border now stretched through Mexico, at least for Central American refugees. It seemed like a trade-off for the free trade agreement: "We'll open up the border and let corporations relocate down there; you keep people with embarrassing stories about regimes we're backing from making it here." (In 1989 more Central Americans were intercepted and deported by Mexican Federales than were caught by U.S. Immigration.)

Cabbage, grapes, apples, all our produce; backs, hands, knees. I showed some students the documentary I'd done as we talked to migrant workers and watched them labor. I asked them if they'd be willing to pay a few cents more for the things they eat if it meant better pay and working conditions for the workers. Among the responses: "well isn't the pay good compared to what they make in Mexico; aren't they in this country illegally; where I live we know it's dangerous to go near the camps because they are drunk all the time." Rather than slash my wrists, I thought about the community I'd spent several weeks with this summer.

The Border Art Workshop/Taller de Arte Fronterizo was rebounding from some rifts of its own, but for me it was a healing community. Primarily because it was a community, and that is increasingly hard to find. One basis of this community is the shared culture that is a deeper reality than the border that makes some of them Tijuans and others San Diegans. Another basis is the collective will to create something and the belief that merging their concepts can strengthen rather than dilute their effectiveness as artists. But perhaps most important is their common conviction that art, when something done with and among working people, is political action and neither condescends nor cultivates alienation. They helped make it possible for me to entertain the idea that I might be an artist while continuing to embrace the values that had separated me from the desire to be one, still carrying the aesthetic baggage of a generation that came of age during the Korean War (excuse me, Police Action).

The plan was to work one week in the Finger Lakes region and one week in Niagara County. Days would be spent at school programs with the children of migrant families and at nights we would visit the adults at their camps, carry on conversations and gather information. Each week would climax with some sort of performance/celebration. Then everyone would come back to Buffalo and spend 12 days synthesizing the experience into a performance/exhibit at Hallwalls.

From the beginning the need was to tie all these efforts so they would all come together and form one another. Some participants quickly formed strong bonds with the children. Others found more nourishment in the visits with the adults in their camps in the evenings and began to extend into daytime forays into the fields where cabbages were being picked or to the packing plants where primarily women cleaned and bagged the vegetables. We found children not allowed to speak Spanish at school where they got yelled at a lot; men working 12 hour a day six day weeks on contract; women, not allowed to work in the fields, struggling to get the maximum allowed 40 hours so they could scrape by on minimum wage. We saw a lot of pesticides and we heard stories of workers sickened by contact with them. We also met teachers and school program administrators who really cared about the children and were open to imaginative approaches.

At the Fiestas on Sundays at Keuka Lake and then at Lockport, these families came together with the Workshop people and everyone else that came into the ring of the week's activities, and everyone danced to music made by some of the migrants. And the Workshop provided some sort of performance that utilized the art work done by the children and the stories we'd heard and the ever present caricatures of the Migra and the purveyors of pesticides. At Keuka Lake a procession of musicians and children laid vegetable offerings around the sleeping goddess who had to rise to help ward off the threat of Migra/Pesticide Man with his wonderful papier maché spray plane that dumped on him before the children drove him running into the lake in his sinking Migra van. Then the children took turns bashing the plane and made it spill, rather than pesticides, sweet goodies into their scrambling hands.

The performance at Lockport was more theatrical, utilizing the performance space at the Kenan Center. And the preparations became ever more intense as the group worked to include more of the experience offered by the migrant children and parents and to purify their own conception. A rap session at the 11th hour that seemed to wrap half way around the clock probed and debated the portrayal of violence or force and the metaphor of a prize fight disappeared and sleepless performers tapped reserves for a high energy performance that used shadow play, direct performance, digital light bar, video, sounds of the field workers, open percussion and reed improvisation, slide projection and slapstick in a way that started out with parts of the performance occluded for different parts of the audience and climaxed in participatory ritual expulsion of the hurtful elements. Many people expressed frustration at the withholding of so much from view, but went away thoughtful about how that works for persons whom the dominant culture marginalizes as "migrants." And then more Fiesta!

After this the group took a pause to recharge and then began to prepare for the Hallwalls performance/exhibit. Unfortunately I had another commitment coming up and had just a few days to work around the clock logging 20 hours of videotape and putting together a videotape that would integrate some aspects of what I'd framed and represent it somehow. Unfortunately I had discovered in the last weeks that my Spanish was even less adequate than I had imagined, especially with border Spanish. Zopilote had helped me with some segments before he flew off to get back to a family and his experimental music performance space at the Ruse in San Diego. Now Carlos Toth came to my rescue, translating whole gobs of interview and conversation and generally helping out with the editing. I abandoned a lot of the structure that the group had evolved for the Lockport performance: The work of the men, the work of the women, the processing of this cultural captivity by the children and the dangers from the dominant institutions. I finished with my collaborator for my next project patiently hanging around a day and a half, and then I fell in to the narcotic sway of the back seat of a car headed for the heartlands.

Buffalo 1991 / Bill Jungels



Victor Clark-Alfaro

Profesor en la Universidad Autonoma de Baja California

y Director del Centro Binacional de Derechos Humanos.

Artículo preparado para la exposicion:

"Destino Los Angeles". Galeria LACE, Los Angeles, California.

Octubre de 1991

Una referencia diaria en la cultura fronteriza mexicana, son las palabras en, el, al o del otro lado. "El otro lado" sugiere una dualidad, que es "este lado", su otra mitad. Nosotros estamos "de este lado" y del otro lado estan "las calles pavimentadas con que se quedaron los americanos"; el lado que nos arrebataron. La mitad que fue de nuestro pais. A pesar del tiempo transcurrido, existe aun un sentimiento de pérdida y despojo que esta presente en nuestros genes históricos. Cuando viajamos con destino a Los Angeles, volteamos a decirle en broma y en serio al vecino "esto era nuestro antes, pero los americanos nos lo quitaron".

Tia Juana en la leyenda, Zaragoza en la historia, Tijuas en los barrios, T.J. (Tiyei) en la Revolución, Tijuana caliente en La Cauila (1), todo es lo mismo, Tijuana es hoy, 102 años despues de su fundacion, una ciudad cosmopolita ligada por muchas redes sociales y económicas, al destino de Los Angeles.

Geográficamente Tijuana se localiza en la latitud del: justo medio. Hacia arriba, en el septemtrion, lo mas avanzado, California, "el estado mas rico del pais más rico del mundo" (referencia que de entrada resulta apabullante). Modernizima tecnologia, universidades, fri-ueis de ocho, carriles, niu-port-bich, Horton plaza, el zoológico, disneylandia, miki maus, Joliud, plantas nucleares, portaviones, submarinos, SIDA, toples, nudes, todo, todo esta alli. De este lado, la insula de Baja California flotando entre dos mares, invadida en su costa meridional pacíficamente y a invitación gubernamental por varios miles de norteamericanos. El resto casi deshabitado, 109 islas, pinturas rupestres, cientos de petroglifos, la naturaleza, el contacto con el mar, el desierto.... Y resulta que Tijuana se encuentra precisamente en la raya, entre California y la península: en el justo medio.

Estar y ser de la raya nos da una visión binacional de las cosas y la vida, que no tienen quienes viven fuera de esta realidad. Es una perspectiva Fronteriza que permite sacarle ventaja a la cultura norteamericana, cuando menos aprender a balbucear ingles, a sus diversiones, tecnologia, comercio....Por otro lado vivir nuestra propia cultura. Culturalmente somos binacionales. Lo que no debe interpretarse como si fuéramos mexico-americanos o una hibrida tercera cultura. No, solo tenemos una perspectiva binacional fronteriza de la vida, es todo.

El acto físico, cultural, social y económico de cruzar de este lado del tercer mundo al primer mundo en cuestión de minutos, marca una diferencia radical que con el tiempo y los cruces repetidos por meses, por años, va desarrollando en los fronterizos sentimientos de frustración y comparación: del otro lado las calles estan limpias, de este lado estan sucias; del otro lado la policia no muerde, de este si; del otro lado las elecciones no son fraudulentas, de este si; del otro lado tienen todos los servicios públicos, de este lado no , etcétera, etcétera.

Cruzar legalmente en vehículo al otro lado, puede ser tormentoso y la espera prolongarse hasta por dos horas, mientras largas hileras de vehiculos con placas norteamericanas y mexicanas, se mueven con lentitud desesperante, se desarrolla una sociologia del cruce fronterizo: las lineas falsas, el vecino que inesperadamente se mete "en nuestra hilera", el pleito y las mentadas de madre; los vendedores ambulantes de: periódicos, cosmopolitan, vanidades, sombreros, refrescos, muñecos, tapetes, etcétera; y las infaltables indígenas mendigando unos dólares o vendiendo chicles y tiras de paletas; los ocasionales gringos-lumpen o los impecablemente vestidos de blanco Soldados de Cristo, tambien pidiendo dólares; los servicios ofrecidos de eficientes limpia-carros o niños limpia-vidrios; los perros amaestrados que dirigen a los agentes norteamericanos entre las hileras de vehículos, tratando de percibir el olor a marihuana, a coca o a quien sabe que; todo en conjunto da una sensacion de atravesar un mercado sobre ruedas o un dia de plaza, que hace el tormentoso cruce mas llevadero. Al final de la hilera, cuando se llega finalmente a la caseta de revision, un agente norteamericano preguntará mecanicamente "que trae", y la respuesta inmediata y lógica, dicha decenas de veces sera "nada", "a donde va", "al mercado, al parque", uno inventa la respuesta, y si ve caras sospechosas procedera a revisar el automóvil, golpeando en los costados, asomarse abajo, arriba y pedirnos que abramos la cajuela y en el peor de los casos a enviarnos a revisión secundaria. Ese será nuestro destino inmediato.

A pie puede ser mas rápido cruzar, aunque muchas veces tampoco se evita una larga hilera esperando Quien sabe porque? pero con los que a pie cruzan parecen darse mas actos de racismo. Los que estan en la hilera esperando solicitar un permiso para ir más allá de San Diego, a Los Angeles la mayoría de las veces, el agente pregunta, revisa, exige pruebas de residencia y trabajo en Tijuana, y con un poder omnipotente puede negar el permiso, o en caso extremo cancelar el pasaporte si abrigo sospechas de que el solicitante tenía las malevolas intenciones de irse a trabajar a los lunaitesteis.

Para evitar todo esto, a veces pienso cruzar de ilegal con toda la familia, que tener que pasar de legal por lineas, esperas, revisiones, perros, discriminaciones. De ilegal solo es el brinco y es todo o nada, para alcanzar un solo destino: La tierra prometida, casi el paraíso, la democracia perfecta: los Estados Unidos.

El acto físico de cruzar ilegalmente a los Estados Unidos, no es tarea ardua ,ni difícil. El problema es llegar a nuestro destino. Entre la raya y Los Angeles se interpone la migra, San Clemente (no el santo precisamente), los bajadores (Baja-pollos o asalta-pollos) y los grupos racistas.

Pero para ayudarnos a cruzar estan los servicios de numerosas agencias de viajes, minoristas y mayoristas, mejor conocidas como coyotes o polleros. Que como cualquier agencia de viajes nos ofrecen el servicio de traslado a nuestro destino en Estado Unidos. Y como las agencias de viajes, tambien funcionan con el mismo slogan de "viaje ahora y pague después". Un coyote contratado en Tijuana, se le pagará cuando cumpla con el servicio completo. Y como los coyotes se aseguran el pago? Generalmente muchos paisanos traen un numero telefónico de algun pariente o amigo en Estados Unidos. Los coyotes le llaman y le preguntaran si va a pagar por su familiar. Asegurado el pago cruzarán al pollo y el coyote cobrará cuando lo entregue a domicilio. Si el servicio se contrato en Centro o Sudamerica, se paga la mitad antes y el resto cuando llegue al lugar de destino.

Encontrar coyotes es fácil, porque primero ellos nos encontraran en la central de autobuses anunciándose " a Los Angeles, a Los Angeles sin papeles!"; o en el centro de la ciudad, en el mercado popular, calle primera, zona norte y en los lugares de cruce ilegal.

Los coyotes se han convertido en un mal necesario en la frontera. En un mal, porque violan el articulo 118 de la Ley General de Población, y necesarios, porque la formas más segura de cruzar a Estados Unidos es con los expertos en la frontera: los coyotes.

Coyotes no había antes, es una especie que se desarrollo al terminar el convenio de braceros (1942-1964), entonces cruzar legal o ilegalmente era fácil, pero después todo se complico. Y desde entonces están los coyotes, para ayudarnos a cruzar. El único pero, es que sus servicios cuestan. Las tarifas varían por lugar de destino y forma de cruzar. La tarifa mínima es de 75 dólares por el brinco, es decir de la linea a San Isidro, y de 250 a 350 de Tijuana a Los Angeles, por ejemplo.

La estructura laboral de los coyotes se ha ido haciendo compleja, lo mismo que la división del trabajo sofisticada. Hay agencias de viajes malas, otras excelentes; muchas formas de cruzar, tarifas distintas, destinos diversos, vocabulario especializado...pero una cosa es cierta, los verdaderos expertos en migración son los coyotes.

A lo largo del país miles de migrantes como hormigas, en hileras, febrilmente van y vienen de sur a norte de este a oeste. Es un ir y venir de mujeres, familias, niños, indígenas, campesinos que van al pueblo, a la fiesta, a cumplir con el cargo, al fil, a la fabrica, a la nursería, a Los Angeles, a Chicago, Carlosbel...Son caravanas que cruzan el país y atraviesan la frontera. Y como hormigas se entrecruzan en el camino, se reconocen, se saludan, se interrogan.

Antes de llegar a su destino final en Estados Unidos, hay otros destinos no finales. Son destinos transitorios, de paso, momentaneos pero necesarios. Uno es la frontera, la raya y de estos en Tijuana: La Cauila (2), el bordo, el cañon Zapata, Mesa de Otay, las vías, el ranchito, (2) La zona roja es un lugar clave para entender el fenómeno migratorio. Los migrantes llegan a este lugar, no precisamente por los bares, sino por los numerosos hoteles de paso y por ser, además, la zona vecina de los principales lugares de cruce ilegal a Estados Unidos. La palmita, el cañon del matadero, el cañon de las cabras o las playas como sitios para brincar al otro lado.

Sin embargo, en los últimos tres años de la "modernidad salinista" los Estados Unidos, principalmente Los Angeles, ha dejado de ser destino migratorio exclusivo de legales o indocumentados campesinos, indígenas, profesores, técnico, doctores, licenciados, estudiantes, clase mediaeros. Otra clase, de religiosos y políticos han tomado a Los Angeles como destino indispensable: el obispo de Zacatecas, viaje a reunirse con los seguidores de su diócesis; Cuauhtemoc Cárdenas, el hijo de Lazaro, se reúne con periodistas y simpatizantes; Colosío Murrieta dirigente del Partido Revolucionario Institucional se junta con priistas emigrados y líderes chicanos; Rosario Ibarra de Piedra con miembros de su partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores; Luis Alvarez hace los mismo con seguidores del PAN; el gobernador de Zacatecas, Borrego de apellido, se reúne con su rebaño; Heladio Ramirez, gobernador de Oaxaca, también toma rumbo y destino a Los Angeles, para pedirles a sus paisanos que "regresen a su tierra"; Salinas de Gortari, Presidente electo en cuestionables elecciones, tambien enfila a California.

A no travesar ilegalmente la vigilada frontera del país más poderoso del mundo, es sin duda un reto colectivo que los mexicanos, más por necesidad que por verdadero gusto o aventura enfrentamos. Es un cruce no deseado, pero necesario.

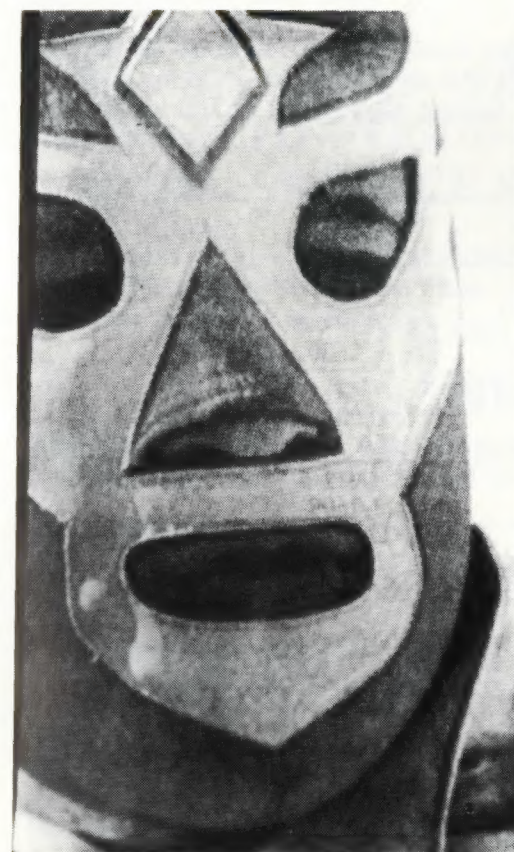
En la dimensión fronteriza cruzar de este al otro lado, ha llegado a ser con los años, un acto natural. La repetición del cruce diari o de cientos de compatriotas es parte del paisaje y la cultura fronteriza.

Sin embargo, aún cruzar legalmente puede ser denigrante, cuando frente a algún agente gringo que ejerce su autoridad-racismo-prepotencia nos vemos impotentes para reclamar derechos y razones.

Cruzar de un mundo a otro es, además de un acto físico con un alto contenido simbólico, un acre cuestionamiento a la política de la clase gobernante.

Las escenas diarias de decenas de paisanos corriendo por los frigueis 805 y 5, las familias que van, los coyotes que esperan a los pollos que atrás quedaron, todos caminando a orillas de los frigueis hasta perderse en la longitud de las modernas carreteras. Cada mexicano en estas lamentables condiciones y los más de cien muertos atropellados en los ultimos cuatro años en esas carreteras, representan un cargo de conciencia para el país, sus gobernantes y políticas de "concertación, modernización salinista y tratos de libres comercios."

El acto físico de brincar un alambre, una malla, una lámina de acero, de atravesar el rio, de caminar entre aguas negras o introducirse por un agujero a otro país, es en sí mismo un hecho doloroso y denigrante.



'If we're organized with others who suffer the same problems, we lose apathy and can convince ourselves that we can solve any problem.'

—Super Barrio

EL GRAN
SUPERBARRIO
VS
LOS CRUELES
BORDER LORDS

DEVELOPERS OF ELEGANT HOMES AND HEARTLESS BARRIERS, EXPLOTADOR DE TODO OBRERO

WEDNESDAY/MIERCOLES 8 MARCH
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CENTRO CULTURAL DE LA RAZA
BALBOA PARK
TEL. 281-7288 - 232-2641

DELAYED CROSSINGS: Preguntas y preocupaciones

binary answers solicited
 to bi-national questions
 customs officials-official customs

WHAT IS YOUR CITIZENSHIP? _____

identify self as citizen.
 show resident alien card.
 show passport with sello.
 look white and at ease.
 get rid of your accent.

WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR VISIT? TO _____

visit relatives and friends.
 drink and carouse.
 get some body work done on my car.
 use the strength of the dollar abroad,
 taking advantage of the weak peso
 and its people.

HOW LONG WAS YOUR STAY? _____

just for the day.
 ask me instead why it was so brief.
 ask nosotros why I/we left or is it
 that you came to us, U.S.?

ARE YOU BRINGING ANYTHING BACK WITH YOU? _____

customs agents knocks on my car door. knock on my head
 if you're looking for contraband mr. customs man.

ANY FIRECRACKERS YOUNG MAN? _____

someday nosotros will bring some firecrackers that will crack through the imposed
 darkness illuminating the possibilities of AZTLAN, (continue to fill in with any other
 latter day pseudo mexchicano revolutionary romantic slogans you can conceive and
 feign to live for and die for; chidos, chavos, cholos, etc.

GO--STOP--GO--STOP--GO--STOP--GO--STOP--GO--
GO--ALTO--SIGUE--STOP--GO--STOP--STOP--SIGUE
STOP--SIGUE--PLATA--ORO--PLATA--ORO--ALTO--

SECONDARY INSPECTION
 SECONDARY INSPECTION
 SECONDARY INSPECTION
 SECONDARY INSPECTION
 SECONDARY INSPECTION

SECONDARY SUSPICIONS
 SECONDARY SUBMISSION
 SECONDARY HUMILIATION
 SECONDARY THOUGHTS
 SECONDARY ADMISSION

SECONDARY INSPECTION
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 SECONDARY INSPECTION
 SECONDARY INSPECTION
 SECONDARY INSPECTION

SECONDARY CITIZENS
 SECONDARY CITIZENS
 SECONDARY SUSPICIONS
 SECONDARY SUBMISSION
 SECONDARY HUMILIATION
 SECONDARY THOUGHTS
 SECONDARY ADMISSION

GO--STOP--GO--STOP--GO--STOP--GO--STOP--GO--
GO--ALTO--SIGUE--STOP--GO--STOP--STOP--SIGUE
SLOW --REDUCE SPEED--SLOW--REDUCE SPEED--

YOU SLOWED DOWN---HALTED---SHAKEN

NUCLEAR REACTORS NUCLEAR REACTORS

NEW CLEAR REALIZATIONS

SAN CLEMENTE INSPECTION STATION AHEAD

My friend Narciso and I were on our way to Los Angeles to go on a ride with Angel's Flight. Angel's Flight is an organization that serves the homeless and migrant population living on the streets in L.A. Narciso and I were going to assist in the food and blanket distribution program.

Throughout the long drive, made longer as a result of a rare tropical thunder storm and the friday night traffic, we got to know each other better. We talked about art, politics, women and everything else that interested, fascinated and confused us. The conversation was flowing smoothly and laughter was erupting constantly which made the time go by quicker than the traffic.

We were both concerned that we would arrive late because of the heavy congestion on the freeway yet we continued on in hopes of making it on time. The conversation continued until we came to a stop at the San Clemente check point.

All the lanes of the freeway were clogged. The traffic was at a standstill. The length of the lines of cars were the same as the ones going into Tijuas on friday night. Unknowingly, we both became silent and reverent as the long procession of cars advanced forward like a lines of Catholics waiting for communion.

It became clear that in order to commune/commute between San Diego and Los Angeles one must confess one's sins. Being Latino, Chicano in our case, Narciso and me. Growing up in this country and talking english the way it is taught to us on television suddenly seemed like insufficient penance to pass through the check station. Only a papal dispensation could result in our original sin, that of being born and looking like our Mexican parents in the United States, being overlooked.

Silence and paranoia engulfed us as we saw the border patrol agents slowly scan each car from behind mirrored sunglasses and then cautiously wave it on, as though they, in their green uniforms and drill sergeant hats, were secular St. Patricks scanning for brown snakes.

The security and confidence that engulfs documented workers and the children of migrants is quickly stripped away at San Clemente. We realized that we live under the illusion of assimilation and inclusion. An ideal given lip service by this society, but which in practice is scoffed at and rejected when it comes to groups that, by virtue of their appearance and strength of their culture,(i.e. Native Americans, African Americans, Chicanos etc.) have survived this nation's most vicious onslaughts, past and present.

We made it in time to go along and assist in the food and blanket distribution that night. We, Narciso and I, could have used a blanket that night in reflection.



On April 27th 7 p.m., people from San Diego known as the "Light up the border" movement will demonstrate on Dairy Mart Rd., near the San Ysidro border. They will park their cars facing south and turn on their headlights, asking for "proper law enforcement," to stop the so called "invasion of illegal aliens." But this kind of "solution" clearly has not worked. Instead, increased militarization has caused more tension, violence and deaths of migrant workers. In their efforts, they have the support of Roger Hedgecock, who is using his radio program on KSDO to convince people of their views. If you disagree with these policies and campaigns; if you feel this is blatant racism:

**COME HELP US REFLECT THEIR
LIGHTS WITH MIRRORS!**

April 27th, 7 p.m. Take freeway 5 south, exit on Dairy Mart Rd. South.
Bring alluminum foil and cardboard.

LET'S MEET AT THE BORDER!

April 28th, 6:00 p.m.

People from San Diego and Tijuana will build an altar at the "Bordo", in Tijuana, to honor all those who have died when crossing the border in search of a better life. Bring candles and/or flowers...



RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF MIGRANT WORKERS!

STOP RACISM!

NO MILITARIZATION OF THE BORDER, NO MORE MIGRA!

¡VAMOS AL "BORDO"!

el 28 de abril a las 6:00 p.m.

Durante los últimos meses, en San Diego ha salido a la luz pública un grupo llamado "Light Up the Border" (Iluminen la frontera), que está pidiendo más dinero para la Migra y para alumbrar la frontera. Pien-san que así podrán contener lo que les parece una invasión de indocumentados; un tipo de racismo apenas disfrazado de civismo, porque este tipo de medidas sólo han servido para aumentar la tensión y la violencia en la zona. Será inútil bloquear las entradas a Estados Unidos mientras en el sur haya gente que sienta la necesidad apremiante de emigrar para buscar alternativas económicas.

Por eso, en el Bordo haremos entre todos un altar en memoria de los que han muerto al cruzar la frontera, víctimas de políticas superficiales y fallidas. ¡Lleven flores y veladoras!



¡Por el respeto a los derechos humanos
y laborales de los migrantes!
¡Contra el racismo!
¡NO más Migra!
¡NO a la militarización de la frontera!



North San Diego County : The New Homeless. Since the Late 1940's, because of the lack of low-income housing in the affluent area of North County, San Diego (Carlsbad, Rancho Santa Fe, Encinitas), migrant workers, many of whom are legal residents of the United States, moved to the uninhabited Green Valley area and set up living facilities in the summer of 1988. There were approximately 200 migrants living there. The news media began reporting on their lack of sanitary living conditions. The reports embarrassed county residents and authorities, who then declared the migrants' living quarters substandard and evicted them. Legalized migrants are among the new homeless in San Diego County in 1989. Asked to leave on February 1, 1989, the Green Valley residents set up camp near an abandoned North County landfill, but county authorities said that they had to move because of Health Department rules and formal complaints from nearby residents. On March 6, the Encinitas sherriff's station conducted sweeps of the new camp, and Border Patrol agents were on hand to deport any undocumented migrants.

San Diego North County nurseries are a \$265-million business. San Diego County Growers do not provide housing for their 14,000 migrant workers. Alternative housing was unavailable to 95 percent of the workers and their families; 85 percent of migrant workers in North County have documents permitting them to work. The Comite Civico Popular Mixteco, organized by workers from Oaxaca (100 percent peasant), is beginning to organize San Diego migrant workers to demand housing for workers, which would include water and electricity, and to establish networks with other California migrant labor camps.





on the bed and then he put the gun to my

People would
give me more
respect. I would
also be looked
up to not look-
ed down on.

WHITE

I can't go to
the college I
deserve to
go to

MEX/CUBAN/A

THEY DON'T
KNOW

WHAT I
AM

People thinking
that your less
just because

MAN

I would
always have
to prove
myself

being weak,
submissive
considered too
aggressive if I try
to dominate in a
bit strong mannerism

Green

Everyone would
be hated by
me because
everyone would
hate me!



Black

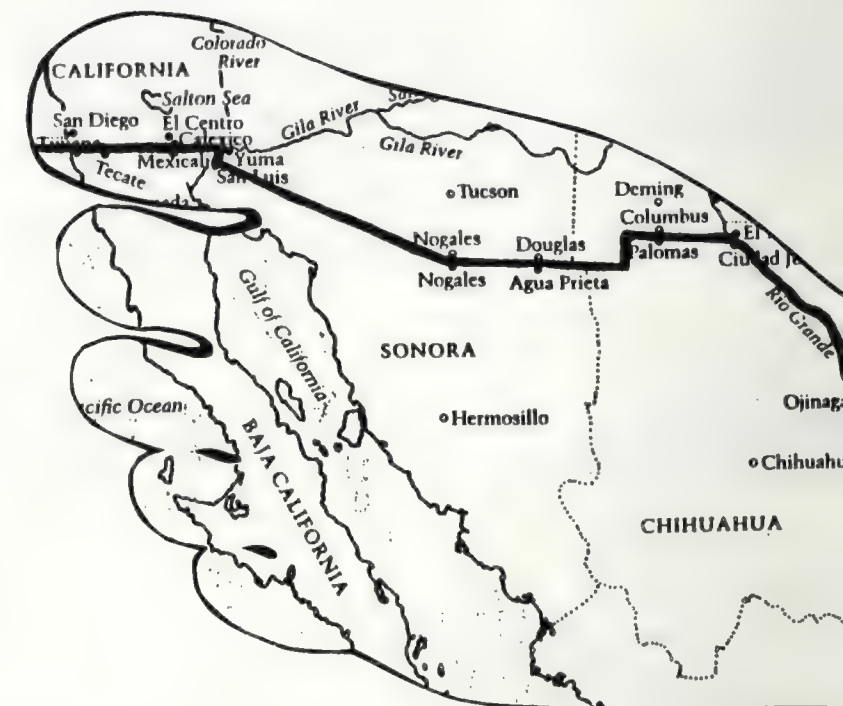
never getting a
real opportunity
experience life as
some one who was
white. I must ab-
sorb prejudices and
stared.

NEW

Gay

I think all







KINDER, GENTLER NATION



MIGRATING BORDERS, UNOFFICIAL LANGUAGES

There should be little doubt in anyone's mind that the reactionary right has come out of the closet in our kinder, gentler nation. Its members have taken off the white hoods, as it were, no longer needing to burn crosses when they have allies in the Supreme Court, not to mention Jesse Helms, the senior art critic of the U.S. Senate.

Broken promises can be felt almost everywhere as the shift to the right gains momentum. In San Francisco on Saturday, July 22, 1989, at 11:30 p.m. INS agents with the full support of the S.F. Police Department raided a club in the Mission District. Hundreds of Hispanic patrons were detained and more than thirty persons were arrested and deported as "illegal aliens" from El Salvador, ensuring arrest and possible death to those returned. This took place in a city declared a "City of Refuge", where voters passed a resolution that reads "City departments shall not jeopardize the safety and welfare of law abiding refugees by acting in a way that may cause their deportation." A week later, temporary shelters built by the homeless at Civic Center Plaza were destroyed.

Add to this the recent decision by the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee to withhold National Endowment for the Arts funds to the institutions which organized the Robert Mapplethorpe and Andreas Serrano shows. The Jesse Helms amendment monitoring NEA funding is frightening as an outright suppression of free speech. It's okay, it seems, to burn teenagers and mentally retarded people in the electric chair, but not okay to burn the flag. Apparently, symbols are important, human beings are not.

Increasingly "fringe" artist/activist individuals are taking these issues into their own hands, founding such groups as the theater troupe Los Angeles Poverty Department (L.A.P.D.) which not only performs on skid row in L.A. but is compromised of many residents or former residents of that community. John Malpede, the director of the company, is also an advocate on behalf of the homeless. For the last couple of years in New York, San Francisco and other cities, ACT-UP has created public actions/spectacles around AIDS issues and health care. One such action was a march in front of New York's Museum of Modern Art in which the participants held frames in front of their faces, protesting the photographic exhibition of People with AIDS (PWA's) by the modernist photographer Nicholas Nixon. His lurid and simultaneously detached photographs portrayed PWA's only as victims, reinforcing stereotypes and ignoring the fact that many people with aids remain healthy and continue to struggle for sexual equality. Groups such as

Mothers of Medusa and the Guerilla girls have been exposing the blatant sexism in the art world, compiling information on the reprehensible inequality in representing women in major museums in this country, and making the information public with posters and leaflets.

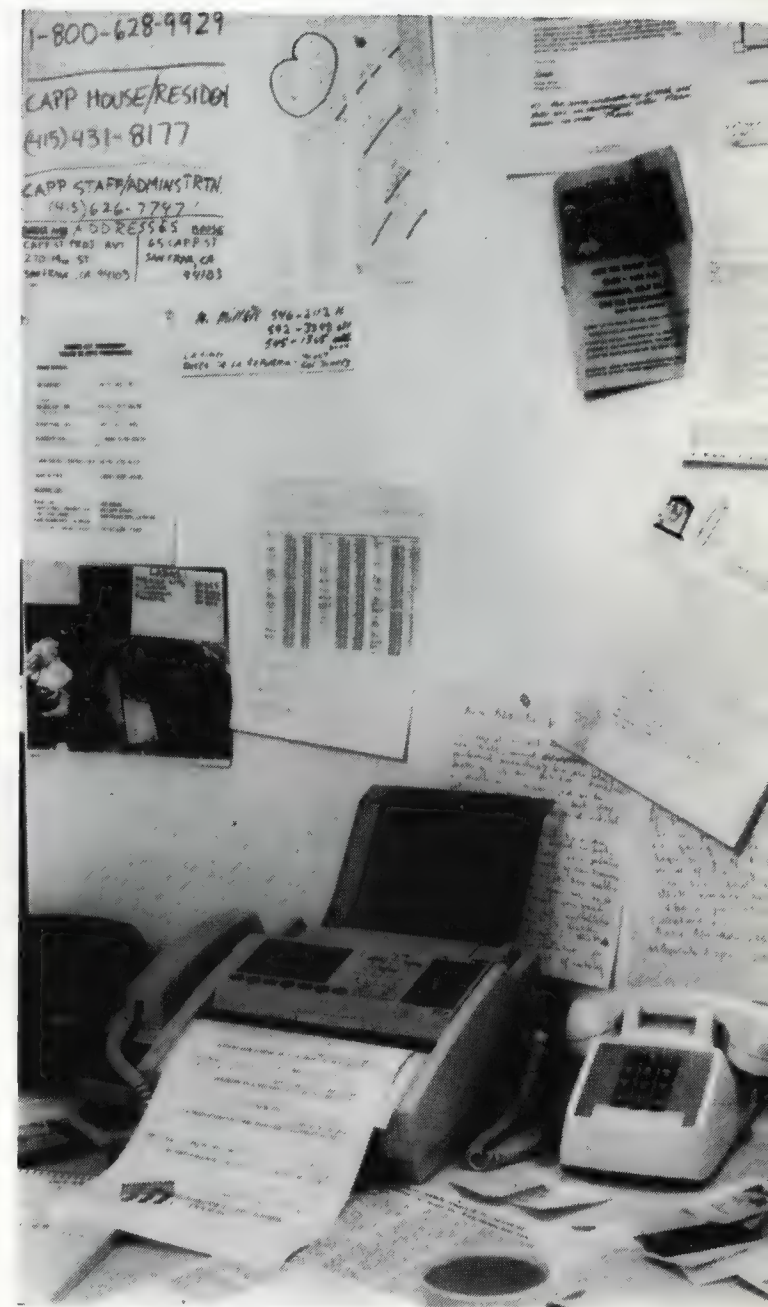
The Border Art Workshop/Taller de Arte Fronterizo (BAW/TAF) is an activist/interventionalist collaborative group of Mexican, American and Chicano artists who use the political border between Mexico and the U.S. as its primary point of reference. Based in San Diego, BAW/TAF is now in the process of a two month San Francisco residency at Capp Street Project. Titling their show *Border Axes/Ejes Fronterizos*, it has created a space for gathering, analyzing, deconstructing and disseminating information. Fax machines, phone systems and a photocopying machine are the tools with which they are constructing an alternative information network, the ideology of community serving as the motivating force behind the work. Fax machines have been placed in San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, Mexico City and Managua as well as hook-ups to other community organizations across the Americas. In each outpost, if you will, the reporting on various issues is being observed, collated and sent to other outposts.

At Capp Street a table of information has been set up as a resource for people interested in such immediately relevant issues as art censorship, AIDS, abortion, immigration, English as official language, the *maquiladora* phenomenon (assembly plants just over the border in Mexico that hire Mexican workers at slave labor wages), and pesticides as they affect farm workers. Also assembled is a table full of periodicals from all over North and Central America. Large banners have been draped across the mezzanine and media installations occupy the walls and corners of the gallery space. A black and blue banner with president George Bush's most hypocritical campaign pledge for a "kinder, gentler nation" hangs next to a banner on which is painted a human bone stripped of any tissue, the word "maquiladora" spread across the top. In one corner another large banner illustrates the border from the Pacific Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico, mapping out the various border towns. Superimposed over the map is a giant human foot suggesting border crossings. When, during the second week of the residency, the Senate Appropriations Committee decision about the NEA was reached, BAW/TAF was immediately on the phone all over the country to develop an appropriate response to this dangerous legislation.

On July 22, four members of BAW/TAF-Bertha Jottar, Robert Sanchez, Michael Schnorr and Gerardo Navarro- performed at the fourth International Anarchist Conference and Festival in San Francisco, subtitled, coincidentally, *Without Borders*. Essentially this performance was a collage of Mexican and American stereotypical encounters done in the agitprop tradition with masks, simple props, good and bad guys. A Mexican waiter serves a rich gringa dressed as a somewhat suburban Statue of Liberty. During their exchange, the contradictions in attempting to define "foreigner" or "immigrant" are brought out, especially as the waiter begins to recite all of the Spanish names of U.S. cities. It is ironic that all the states that have declared English as the official language have Spanish names: California, New Mexico, Florida, Arizona, Nevada, etc. In August other members of BAW/TAF-Guillermo Gomez-Pena, Emily Hicks, Richard Lou, Victor Ochoa and Rocio Weiss- will be arriving in San Francisco. Ochoa will be working on community murals collaborating with local artists; Hicks and Weiss will perform a series titled *Breakfast with Frida* in which local community leaders will be interviewed. Two local artists who are collaborating with BAW/TAF are Rene Valdez and Salvador Garcia. On view are videotapes from various members of the group, *Legalized Migrants are the New Homeless, San Diego, CA* by Jottar/Schnorr/Toth, following the plight of migrant workers who labor in the flower agribusiness. Because there is literally no low-income housing in the area, these workers are living in the canyons. Every few months the police make a sweep and the workers lose their encampments, moving on to yet another canyon. It is evident in this tape that the city creates homelessness as a matter of policy. *Backyard to Backyard* interviews long-time residents of both San Diego and Tijuana, debunking many cultural myths both ancient and contemporary, one being that a border is portrayed in the media as a war zone where hordes of "illegals" clash with a heroic border patrol.

Capp Street Project, which up to now has generally served the elite of "high art", has been radically transformed into an activist forum by the BAW/TAF. Members are in residence on site, speaking to any of the artists involved and encouraging dialogue. Inevitably, the conversation turns to the role of the artist in society. BAW/TAF works in the center of society instead of the margins, making art only a part of the process, exploring the frayed edges of culture. In their eyes the artist is a proponent of debate, a journalist and educator actively dealing with the world of information. They are interested in a North/South dialogue that is intercultural and more symmetrical than the warped and racist relationship that has been the mediated norm. Issues of culture, immigration, economics and ecology are woven into complex performances and installations. The border is now all places where cultures meet, where there is inequality. BAW/TAF jumps into the fire and asks you what your role will be.

San Francisco/Mark Alice Durant





Ladies and Gentlemen! We take this opportunity to present some underfunded artists for your day of the dead artist altarpiece! The appropriately appropriated cultural artifact turned to floral arrangement. The artist as accomplice! By the competition at the Company Store... Ladies and Gentlemen! What would you pay for a genuine authentic exotic art object?



WHO will start the bidding? Come on now, look at the background, the history, the romantic tragedy of survival! Come on now! If you cannot buy it all then why not just go for a piece? Come on now, let's not hold back! Who will start the misery of cultural exploitation? Once purchased no need to feel guilty you can give it a place of honor and disregard it the rest of the night... come on now... come on...

Jane Tassi
ELEVEN YELLS

Blood jumps out
calliope
runs over the hands
mesmeric
Like seas and lives and lilies
then eels in a dream

I look up.
Stars transfer to me
in many bloody animal bites.
I curl down warm
in the dark lean-to
of you a dream

we
tiger
&
anger
&
sadden
Vaccinate
against
nightmare

raze
razz
razzmatazz
stop-it-bullet
burr burn
bomb balm
Pebbles
in the mouth
of the moon

The belly is
moony
the eyes
moon
the incorporeal
the thing in flight
the wind around the flower

I'd never heard such
complex, twirling
pound of grubworms
howling
from a boy:
dawnhour untongued lifenoise

Horrors & angels
& horrors & crystals
of time.
Wake and wish it were
green snows as easy
to disenburn these scenes

Watery field
give off—
green sleep.
There are wolves
in her thinking.
A necklace so many

he was
fistfights against seed bulls
fishguts sunsets every night
then nothing
A self-sized wafer
of his own creature
evaporates every day
like tide action

The voice becomes
beseems now, bees
she says
she dreams she bleeds
That bleeding will be to her
a dream

Now they've got ya
seasons & years worth
seconds & hours.
Got you down to your last glasswater
and few hundred steps
and four more murmurs
and scratch head once





WZ

One day we were doing a border tour with an east coast journalist. We ended our journey as night began to fall on the soccer field / Canyon Zapata. After a minute down in the field a small white pick-up truck passed us speeding towards the border from the northern side of the border. The truck became stuck in the sand about 20 feet from the international boundary line. A few seconds later a border patrol vehicles came into the field in pursuit of the truck. The driver got out of the truck and ran into Mexico where a large crowd of people had gathered. As the border patrol agents surrounded the truck the people in the crowd began to shout. The agents drew their weapons and then a border patrol tow truck arrived. Rocks were thrown by the crowd at the border patrol agents and they began to retreat! Men from the crowd ran into the US, lifted the pick-up truck, and carried it across the border into Mexico.



FURROWS OF FLOUR AND RICE

Jeff Kelley

The Soccer Field is the barren expanse of ground behind Tijuana's oldest neighborhood, Colonia Libertad, where would-be migrants wait in small groups to catch the economic tides that drift back and forth across the Americas. Each day, about an hour before sunset, these *indocumentados* filter down through the neighborhood to gather in the Soccer Field, where they eat, drink, trade information and await the call to move out beyond the farthest plateau and into the deepest canyon, into a surreal gamescape of fading sunlight and brilliant searchlights, of hovering aircraft, waiting authorities and workers become fugitives in a zone overrun by an almost desperate legality. The United States Border Patrol has plowed furrows to the north of the Soccer Field deep enough to stop cars if they try to cross, but the combined weight of countless feet has rounded ditches into ruins, softening the whole of Canyon Emiliano Zapata - an arid complex of gullies, plateaus and hills for which the soccer field is a staging area - into a kind of dusty geopolitical pass. Here, the erosion of borders is less a metaphor than a fact.

Though the Soccer Field has been appropriated over the years as a kind of neighborhood square by the residents of Colonia Libertad, it is actually a patch of U.S. territory. To enter this place is to have already left Mexico, though one may be prevented from moving any farther north. As an embarkation site for a migration across the border, The Soccer Field has been described by some North American journalists as a no-man's land, a DMZ, even as "one square mile of hell." Colonia Libertad has likewise been called a "teeming, reeking slum." Given the range of humanity that passes through it, the Soccer Field is indeed a risky place to be, but one feels more threatened by partying white males in San Diego than by the residents and migrants of Colonia Libertad, which seems more abundant than "teeming", and usually smells like food. It is the poetics of the mass media that involve the substitution of metaphors for the place itself, often from great and lofty distances.



Metaphors hang over our continent like a semiotic haze. They rise from our computer keyboards and never settle, contributing to a media mythology about place from the viewpoint of the U.S. self-interest. A dream state, a state dream. But a place comes into art loaded with content, already meaningful and can embody more than one dream state: it can be a state of menace to the border agent, a state of waiting and hunger to the immigrant, a state of war to the conservative columnist, a state of enterprise to the local taco vendor, a state of irony to the social critic, a state of art to the border artist. A border state of art.

Michael Schnorr, a founding member of the Border Art Workshop/Taller de Arte Fronterizo, or BAW/TAF, has described the Soccer Field as a place where many try to be but no one wants to stay, a place of anxious waiting for the intoxicating hours just before and after sunset. To Schnorr, we are at the neck of an hourglass laid on its side. Stand the glass upright and dusk becomes its turning point. A point of no return. Here, the best metaphors are grounded in the place itself. They coat your tongue like the dusk of bemused *indocumentados* as they walk northward - through performance art.

Along with BAW/TAF member Richard Lou, Schnorr created a series of seven monthly performances, "Destination L.A.", specifically for the Soccer Field and those who pass through it. Called "performance interventions", they are designed as porous, low tech spectacles staged in the path of this tragic socioeconomic migration. As such, they invite, and receive, both indifference and active participation neighborhood residents and migrants, some of whom see them as entertaining

interludes in a profoundly monotonous place. Others, however, are too concerned with the journey ahead to pay much heed. Come dusk, the *indocumentados* move inevitably through and around the performances. The image here is not of art becoming life, but of life passing through art as a function of place. In another place, one would need another art.

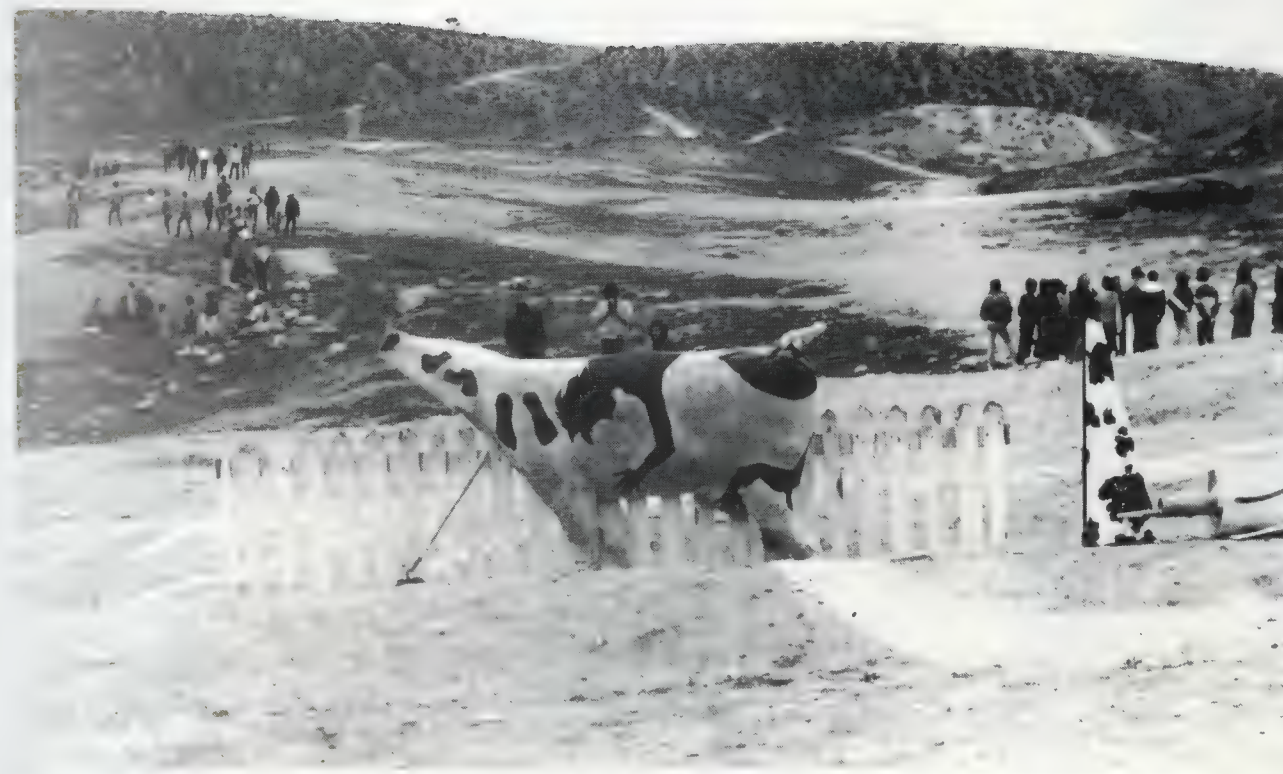
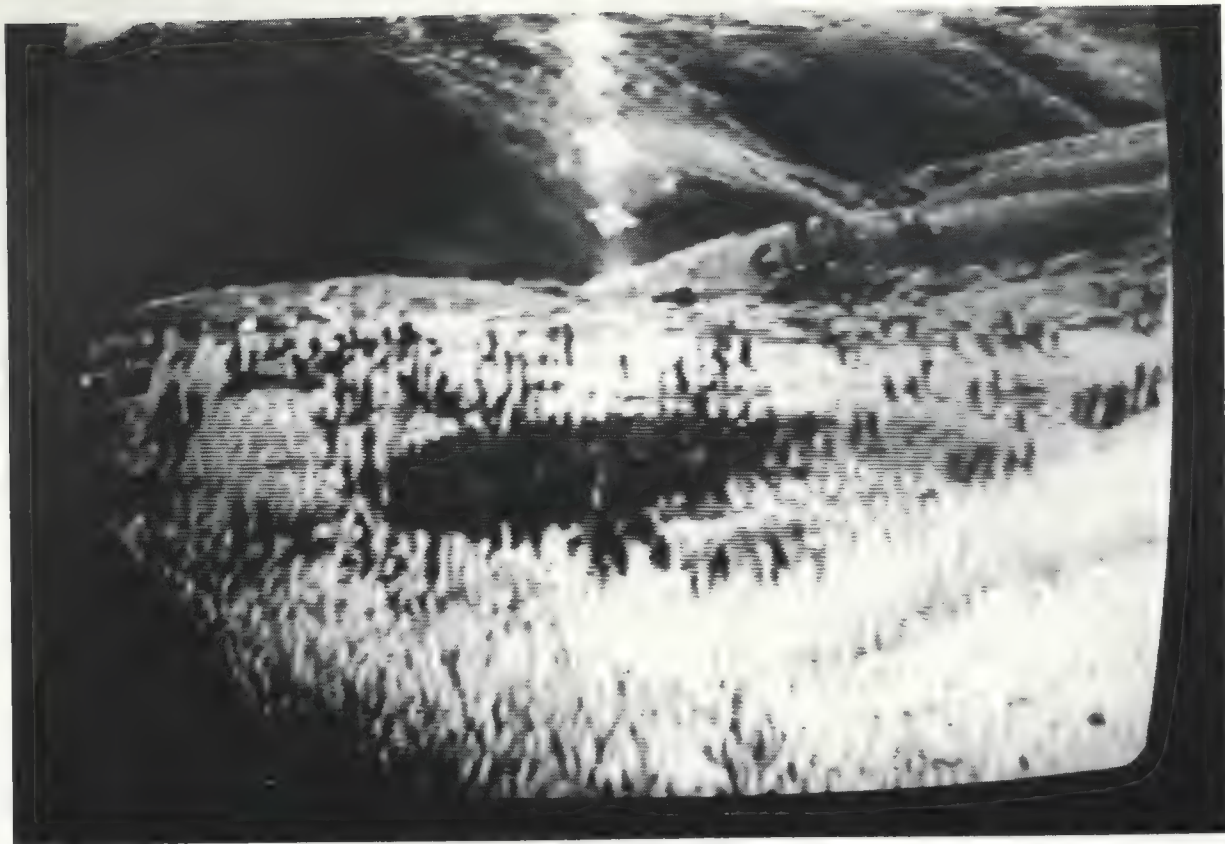
When they arrive at the Soccer Field, the artists ask the local residents for permission to perform, for assistance in setting up and, finally, for their participation in the performance itself. By doing so, they acknowledge Mexican historical, cultural and economic claims to this piece of North America. By entering Mexico legally, descending into Canyon Emiliano Zapata, and then crossing back into the Soccer Field at Colonia Libertad (where they perform), the artists, like everyone else here, enter the U.S. illegally.

For each performance, a game board - be it chess, Chinese checkers or Monopoly - is drawn in the dirt with a mixture of flour and rice, a symbol of the artists desire to add no new chemical or cultural toxins to the Soccer Field. In addition, such homemade, vernacular props as wooden crosses, a coffin or a styrofoam border monument may be placed on-site. The performances themselves are based on historical and contemporary events relevant to, and resonant with, the troubled history of U.S./Latin American relations, including the New World atrocities of Christopher Columbus, the invasion of Panama and even the breach of the Berlin Wall. In each case, the artists explain the theme to the onlookers in advance and the performance unfolds within the framework of that explanation. In addition, the works use familiar icons and rituals of the Mexican-Catholic liturgy, and reflect daily cat-and-mouse scenarios played out along the border. A contemporary story with historical reference is enacted in the terms of Mexican community traditions and in the context of a particular place - not just "the border", but *this* place, the Soccer Field.

A performance in December 1989, for example, was based on a *posada*, a call-and-response procession in which worshipers seek permission to enter the Soccer Field - to enter the U.S. After singing back and forth in Spanish, the children granted entry and the procession of artists, carrying *piñatas* on long poles, pass through a row (A Berlin "wall") of wooden crosses and burning sparklers. In the dirt beyond them lay the starshaped outline of a Chinese checkers board (A Tienanmen "square"), symbolically opening up this narrow north-south conduit of migrant labor by suggesting a multiplicity of directions of movement and equality of every movement's starting place. From the cardinal points of the checkerboard the artists read texts about racial stereotypes, the lost lives - *vidas perdidas* - of undocumented workers, and the frontier mentality of European pioneers vis-à-vis Mexico. A moment later the *piñatas* were broken and the children posed for Polaroids in front of a styrofoam obelisk bearing the motto "Borders Block Our View." They disappeared with their photographs - the performance seemed to be over. Against a full moon, vendors, children and artists drifted away. The *indocumentados* had been gone since dusk.

Much of the inspiration for "Destination L.A." was provided several years ago by a local priest, Padre Flor Rigone, who regularly said Mass in the Soccer Field, blessing those crossing an "illegal border" and speaking of their migration in terms of a biblical exodus, what he called the "fourth world." Meanwhile, U.S. and Mexican authorities have talked of cooperating on digging more trenches, outflanking migrants and schooling Tijuana police in law enforcement techniques. (Since this essay was written, steel landing pads, recently used for U.S. military aircraft in the war against Iraq, have been welded upright and end to end from the Pacific Ocean to the Tijuana airport, cutting through the Soccer Field.) Between these two perspectives lies the Soccer Field, the metaphorical neck of an hourglass still poised to turn each dusk., in contrast to the historic turning points we have seen this year in places like Berlin. Yet if the Berlin wall was a symbol of Cold War politics, it was never merely a symbol: it was also a concrete barrier dividing not so much the "Free World" from the Eastern Block as one neighborhood block from another, or this friend and family from that. With its Soccer Field performances, BAW/TAF reveals the human, neighborhood and even family scale of the mass mediated concept called "the border". For although presidents do not speak here, the Soccer Field looks out upon a no less divided neighborhood, a no less broken family.

Of late, BAW/TAF has itself endured serious family discord, with some members decrying its appropriation by the art press and institutions, others pronouncing its death. Yet for those who remain, performing in the Soccer Field may be a way of getting back to basics, of acknowledging their primary constituency: the citizens of border culture, where most of these artists grew up. In effect, these "performance interventions" are pretexts for being in the Soccer Field *as artists* since art is the last thing BAW/TAF members want to bring here; that message - transmitted through pages like these - is for a different and very distant audience. Here in the neighborhood, there is no audience, just people whose place it is, whose permission is necessary. Think of it: artists with constituents rather than audiences, working in places rather than sites, social realists digging metaphors from a real and social ground, intervening in the state dream, prepared to acknowledge reality but willing to appropriate only the moment.





Next time
you come to Texas
on business, bring
your partner.

"The first criminal indictment ever filed against INS agents was handed down by a federal grand jury on September 26, 1979, accusing four agents of thirty-eight overt acts of brutalization of Mexicans and a subsequent coverup. Six weeks earlier the Border Patrol announced a policy of diverting "illegal aliens" from Mexico into the deserts and mountains east of San Diego, even though, as one patrol agent told reporters, 'We realize it could mean death for many from exposure or thirst.' "

--from Outlaws in the Promised Land: Mexican Immigrant Workers and America's Future, by James D. Cockcroft, Grove Press, Inc., New York, 1986

The art many of us are making in this region is in response to the point of view expressed in the following quote from a caller to a San Diego radio talk show:

"The greatest danger that faces America is immigration from the Third World...you have a situation where a whole continent was taken by white people from Europe by force. Now the question is not whether it's right or wrong because ultimately might is right...That's Darwinian theory, whether or not you agree...So if you sealed the border to Mexico tomorrow, you would turn Mexico into a Communist country with social upheaval. If you don't seal the border, you're going to destroy the United States as an identity. The United States has an identity as an English-speaking European country. In 1924 they passed a law, and the whole purpose of the law was to preserve the composition of the population of the United States...[favoring Northern European]...Since 1965 things have gotten so far out of hand, not only here but in Germany, England, Sweden, and everywhere else, that there is invasion by the third world. Things have gotten completely out of control", and "If they don't come legally, they should be immediately deported or shot at the border."

In sight of millionaires' residences live Mexican and Central American laborers, many of whom possess "proper" documentation. Whole communities, with homes made of cardboard, aluminum siding, and other found and ingeniously adapted materials, are made up of people whose wages, while better than in Mexico, won't allow them the inflated housing costs, and who are also supporting families at home. **The "first" and "third" worlds are not easy neighbors.** Camp Pendleton, one of the major military bases in San Diego County happens to surround one of the checkpoints where twenty people traveling north, trying to cross the freeways to avoid being caught by the Border Patrol, were hit and killed by cars this past year. There has been a federal commitment of funds to build a bigger, better Border Patrol checkpoint at San Onofre. This survived the current budget crisis. So we have some worlds colliding in our region.

Before the gold rush of the 1840's, a great deal of what is now the Southwestern US was part of Mexico. The war between the US and Mexico was waged as usual for financial and territorial reasons by bureaucrats and businessmen. As a result of that war, about half of Mexico's land was forfeited and the Treaty of Guadalupe was agreed to and signed. In this treaty among other agreements, people of Mexico could at least keep title to their lands and their language, but that agreement was broken.

There is a long history of extreme conservatism in San Diego -- violent and deadly attacks on the Wobblies, the International Workers of the World, took place in San Diego around the turn of the century. Tom Metzger, convicted in a civil trial in Portland for involvement in the killing of an Ethiopian man, lives in Fallbrook, a town in north San Diego county. To quote Elinor Langer, in her 1990 article in *The Nation*, "In addition to many joint activities with [David] Duke in California, including a Klan patrol of the Mexican border to prevent illegal immigration, he helped manage Duke's first electoral campaign, for the Louisiana Senate in 1975."

There are documented cases of racist attacks and hate crimes specifically directed against people of Latino descent, and they are rising all the time. The local office of the American Friends Service Committee has numbers and testimonies of scores of cases. From 1982 to December, 1989, at least 41 cases of shooting by the Border Patrol, many of which were deadly, have been documented.

Institutionalized racism runs throughout our educational and governmental systems, with kids in North San Diego County high schools coming forward with personal testimony of racial discrimination and harassment, attacks being leveled against them and their having no recourse. At a local

La Jolla elementary school, a school which receives Federal monies to support its integration program, the children who are bussed in from the Latino sections of San Diego are kept segregated classrooms within the school. The principal, who confronted by an artist/parent, said that there was an enormous negative reaction on the part of the La Jolla school's parents the suggestions of further integration of these children into the school population.

There is an interconnected and powerful network of racist organizations across the U.S., as Elinor Langer documents in her article entitled "The American Neo-Nazi Movement Today." **Although they don't all go by the same name, quote the same sources, apparently they are related ideologically.** This kind of thinking is fully in operation. San Diego County. A local human rights advocate has received a number of very threatening hate letters. As Langer observes: There are approximately five major racist groups: The Nazis who operate from the traditional Nazi ideology; the skinheads (which may be the most widespread and potentially dangerous); Their names range from Youth of Hitler to American Front, connected to Tom Metzger's White Aryan Resistance or WA; The Ku Klux Klan which has broken into three separate arrival groups; the Posse Comitatus which is basically anti-state and is called by the names Christian Patriots and American Freeman Association; and the Christian Identity Movement which is an Aryan inspired religious denomination which holds that the chosen people are white, that Jews are descended from Satan, and that all non-whites are mud people, a lower species. There is a particularly strong tendency in a lot of the thinking on the right I've heard articulated to criticize all forms of organized government, the mainstream media, and to bring government down to the local level. When fleshed out with criticisms against migrant workers or "illegal aliens" the expressions seem closely aligned with the Posse Comitatus or the Christian Identity Movement mentioned above.

Light Up The Border is a group of people who view San Diego's, California's, and likely the nation's problems produced and perpetuated by the migration of Mexican workers. It is a relatively small protest group which is fundamentally grounded in racism and which promotes simplistic solutions to the very complex socioeconomic problems intertwining the countries and peoples of the US and Mexico. It is an outgrowth of a more central group, Alliance for Border Control which is in turn, associated with national groups, but **ties to any other organizations are acknowledged.** People hear about a Light up the Border event on the radio and drive to a specified spot along the US/Mexico border, park their cars and turn their headlights on in the direction of Mexico to "shine a light on the problem." The local radio talk show is hosted by former mayor of San Diego, Roger Hedgecock, who was convicted of 14 counts of misappropriation of campaign funds and related charges and who, on appeal, overturned all but one of the convictions. He is the most vocal and effective proponent of the Light Up The Border movement, but will not take responsibility for his role. **Crime, disease, an overburdened welfare system, unemployment are all attributed to the "Hispanic" population** by callers to his show. There is no differentiation among groups of Latinos. To quote Audrey Bergner, an organizer of the Alliance for Border Control, the parent organization of Wake up Washington and Light up the Border, "The cost in terms of dollars to a State or Municipality is only one aspect of illegal alien fiscal impact since the loss of a job, loss of business or a vehicle, an assault or rape, robbery at home, increase in insurance rates, both vehicular and medical undoubtedly doubles or triples official figures...It must also be noted that absolutely no racial bias is intended or implied."

There is a very high level of anxiety, a feeling of being out of control, distrustful of the 'Other,' and a markedly disjointed set of misinformed arguments held by many of the people who call in. It is striking to me that the verbiage used by our local infamous racist, Tom Metzger, and that used by the Light Up The Border sympathizers is so similar. Metzger's call

to show, *Race and Reason* is portrayed as being "an island of free speech in a sea of managed and controlled news" and Hedgecock's radio talk show is portrayed identically, while not saying as much. Callers will call in and speak almost identical words and Roger will thank them. One of the only comments Roger Hedgecock made to the caller I quoted at length at the top of this piece was "I understand." When someone calls who he doesn't agree with, he will interrupt, insult and hang up on them. Continual criticism of the media's biases are voiced by Hedgecock and many of the callers, as I mentioned earlier. There are proposed solutions to the problems on the border ranging from a more effective fence to **"deploying crack troops along the border to teach them a lesson."**

Hedgecock, who claims "there is no group but that there is just a group of citizens who come together occasionally to bring attention to the problem," is lobbying for better fences along the border, more border patrol, and 'more effective' law enforcement practices to "stem the flood" of migrant workers. In an interview I taped, he said that he has "no idea why they are coming" [across the border] and they should use their "visa" cards. He says he has no idea why people from Mexico leave their homes and families to work in the U.S. He passionately disassociates himself from any racist motivations, although people at the Light Up The Border demonstrations have admitted their racist sentiments. They say as a body that they are simply out for the integrity of America, the return to feeling safe and secure, and the elimination of the social and economic woes besetting the citizens of San Diego County. If it weren't for the flood of "illegal aliens" our country would be able to return to the simple life, where life is good and people are able to live among people like themselves, secure in having achieved the American dream, a myth in itself.

A local representative of the American Friends Service's US/Mexico Border Program, Roberto Martinez, has told me, when I despaired of there being a solution, that education of the children provided the most solid hope; that you couldn't change the racists, but that the problems of racism based in ignorance and fear might be alleviated if the kids are educated much like they are being now about drugs. Everyone is affected by racism, but it behooves people in positions of power to keep a second-class labor force in place, exploited and expendable.

To quote Bertram Gross, the author of *Friendly Fascism* (South Boston Press, 1980):

I am worried by those who fail to remember---or have never learned---that Big Business-Big Government partnerships, backed up by other elements, were the central facts behind the power structures of old fascism in the days of Mussolini, Hitler, and the Japanese empire builders.

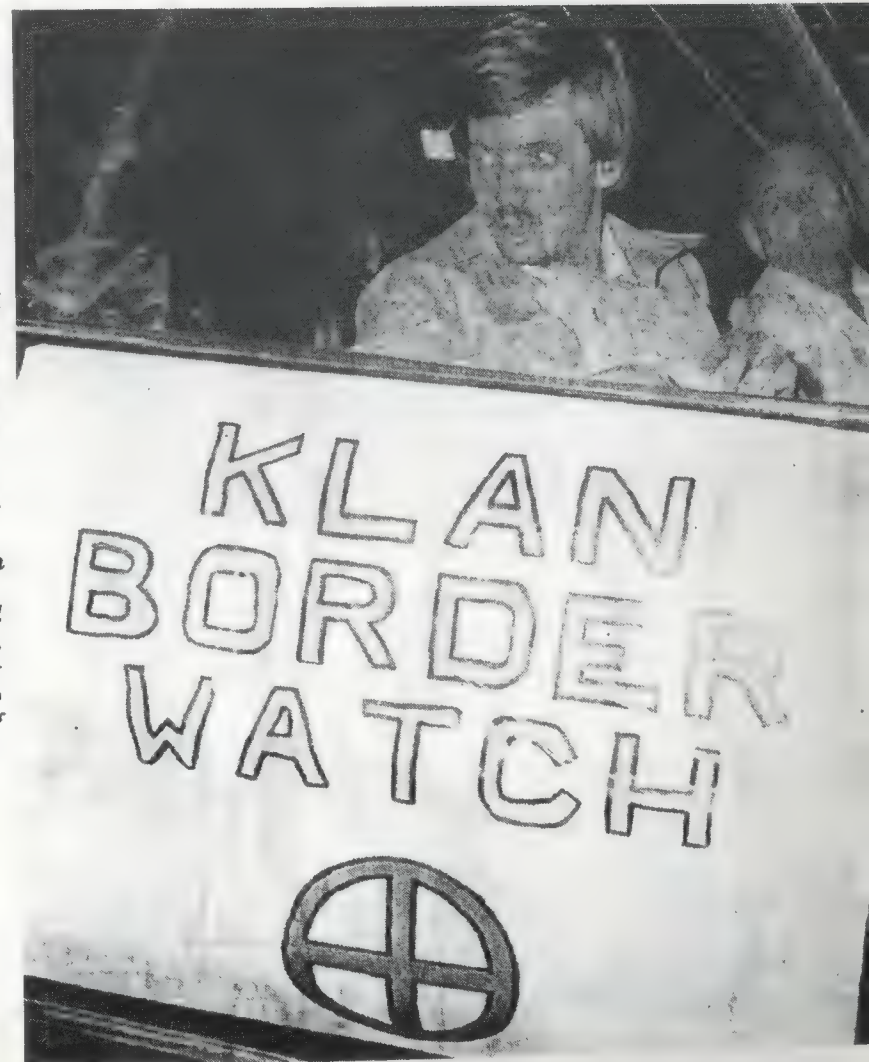
I am worried by those who quibble about labels...if it is fascism, it must appear in the classic, unfriendly form of their youth....

I am upset with those who prefer to remain spectators until it may be too late....

I am afraid of inaction. I am afraid of those who will heed no warnings and who wait for some revelation, research, or technology to offer a perfect solution...I am dismayed by those who will not hope, who will not commit themselves to something larger than themselves, of those who are afraid of true democracy or even its pursuit."

Kirsten Aaboe

October, 1990





BORDER SUTURES/PUNTADAS FRONTERIZAS
A TRANSBORDER PROJECT: 7/01/90 - 7/22/90
BORDER ART WORKSHOP/TALLER DE ARTE FRONTERIZO

The project consisted of various components; part border research, part performance/interventions/suspension, part travelling medicine show, part humble acts of healing, and part osmosis. A 32' long motorhome was used as an intrasocial laboratory, studio on wheels, conference room, and living quarters to traverse the entire border between Mexico and the United States. When engaging in the various performance/rituals, BORDER STAPLE, BORDER BAPTISM, BORDER BEDS, and BORDER TUG OF WAR, the distinction between artist and audience was consciously nonexistent, another hierarchy being imposed by outsiders was not needed. The structure of these suspensions/interventions were kept fluid enough to allow any participant, artists, residents, and undocumented migrants, to alter the direction of the performance, as well as to allow for adjustments appropriate to the personality of the environment.

BORDER STAPLE: Aside from the daily informal interviewing of border residents and undocumented migrants, the other constant, to the point of becoming an obsessive ritual, was the act of physically stapling the United States and Mexico back together using large steel staples measuring anywhere from 2 ft. to 6 ft. in span and 6 to 9 inches in width, 1/4 inch gauge. Twenty four (24) steel staples were either pounded into the Earth or a floating device was constructed in which to place the staple and then floated down the Rio Bravo/Grande. This particular socio/political act of people/earth healing extends the entire breadth of the economic, cultural, and historical continental divide, from ocean to ocean, between the United States and Mexico.

BORDER BAPTISM: This was the accompanying ritual to the BORDER STAPLE where the group would baptize themselves and the staple using ocean water from the Pacific, The Gulf of Mexico/Atlantic, and the Rio Bravo/Grande to create a "New Mezcla" in order to annoint willing participants into the New Border Culture.

BORDER BEDS: On three separate occasions, in the Gulf of Mexico, Boquillas Canyon, and Playas de Tijuana, the group performed this ritual of drawing in the sand an image of a bed and a person in the bed referring to, at one level, the birth place of another culture.

BORDER TUG OF WAR: This performance was used twice during the project at El Paso, TX and El Canyon Zapata, Tijuana, BCN. Two teams of players one wearing BAW/TAF wrestling masks and the others wearing MIGRA Masks, ie. Immigration and Naturalization Officers - Border Patrol, square off holding opposite ends of a rope. BAW/TAF PLAYERS to the south, MIGRA PLAYERS to the north begin pulling when they hear the command by the umpire. The North - South axis delineated by the taut rope begins to rotate, reorienting the conventional notion of North/South, 1st World/3rd World, etc.



BORDER TUG-OF-WAR

A I R E S T I J U A N E R O S

*Un recuento de algunos sucesos extraños
ocurridos en el primer
y/o último rincón de la patria
[todavía] mexicana*

Estos murales portátiles se hicieron a propósito del intenso debate político que se dio en México con motivo de las elecciones presidenciales de 1988. Los murales incluían fotografías, gráfica y textos.



Una primera impresión de Tijuana es la de una ciudad árida y polvosa, en donde cualquier tipo de vegetación tiene dificultades para sobrevivir. Sólo después se nota que la gente ha ido creando sus propios oasis, lo mismo jardines y huertos de distintos tamaños, que terrazas y porches poblados con macetas más o menos modestas; además, están las plantas silvestres que milagrosamente se aferran a las laderas, a la tierra arenosa y reseca. Algo similar sucede cuando se piensa en el trabajo artístico y cultural que se está haciendo en esta ciudad: la gente interesada ha ido creando y manteniendo su trabajo, sus espacios, a pesar de las dificultades crónicas, como la escasez de recursos económicos o la falta de espacios para crear y presentar su trabajo. Estas fotografías captaron momentos y ambientes de algunos eventos que se llevaron a cabo en Tijuana a partir de 1987 y que comparten ciertos elementos comunes.

**La calle, la calle,
siempre ese espacio
tan atractivo,
impredecible,
público y vedado
a la vez.**

Para celebrar la llegada del equinoccio de primavera, en 1988 salió a pasear una gran serpiente multicolor. Decían que era Quetzalcóatl visitando esta frontera, pero también nos recordó la danza del dragón chino. El llamativo desfile chino-mexica terminó en la línea, justo en la tierra de nadie a la entrada de los Estados Unidos de Norteamérica.

En este evento fue importante la participación de Tizóc García, Jorge Peña y sus alumnos en las percusiones y del director teatral Jorge Andrés Fernández y sus alumnos. También hubo un contingente notable de invitados de San Diego que se unieron para celebrar esta visita de la serpiente emplumada a la frontera. Los organizadores fueron Gerardo Navarro, Hugo Sánchez y José Martínez.



En las primeras páginas, están las imágenes de eventos realizados en la calle o en espacios públicos. En algunos casos, se quiso propiciar el diálogo público sobre asuntos de actualidad política y social; en otros el tono fue más bien festivo, carnavalesco.

Casi sobra decir que fueron eventos que, en su momento, causaron controversia y hasta alguna visita a la cárcel municipal.

Otro aspecto común en estos eventos, ha sido la participación de gente de San Diego e incluso de otras ciudades de California; o sea, se trata de algunos de esos episodios del todavía escaso intercambio cultural a través de la frontera.

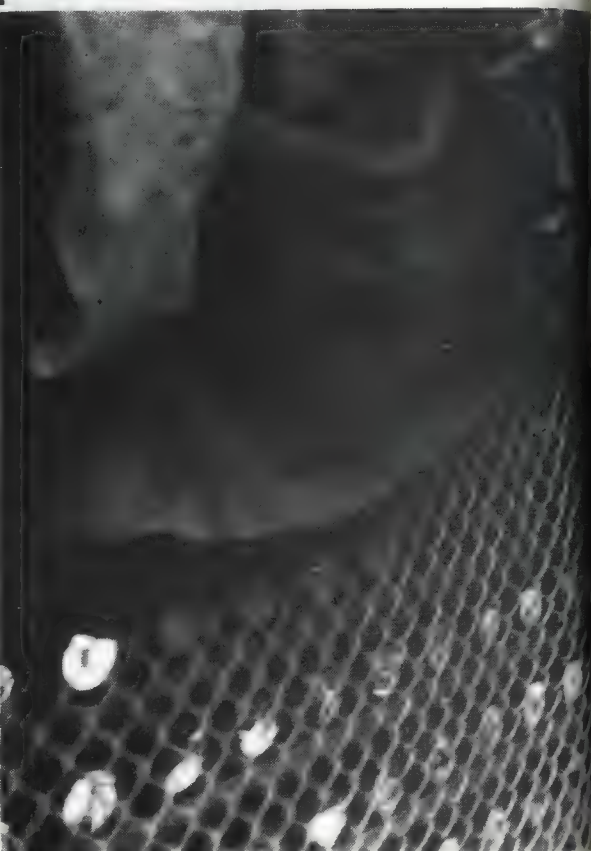
En las últimas páginas se incluyeron imágenes de conciertos y obras de teatro de un tono distinto, que se presentaron en espacios cerrados. Sin embargo, también son el resultado de un trabajo creativo que busca caminos independientes fuera de la cultura institucional y del interés comercial.

AIRES TIJUANERO



Durante 1990 fue particularmente intensa la actividad de los grupos antiinmigrantes y racistas en San Diego. Para presentar una visión crítica y alternativa de los problemas relacionados con la migración hacia el norte, artistas y activistas de San Diego y Tijuana trabajaron conjuntamente en una serie de actos y contramanifestaciones. Uno de ellos se llevó a cabo en El Bordo, un lugar de la frontera entre ambas ciudades en donde los aspirantes a indocumentados se reúnen a esperar el momento de burlar a la Migra.

Allí en El Bordo, se levantó un altar rústico para recordar a todas las personas que han muerto en el intento de internarse sin papeles a la "tierra de las oportunidades".



2 de febrero de 1991: A propósito del aniversario de la firma del Tratado de Guadalupe-Hidalgo, gente de ambos lados de la frontera se reunió en el cerco fronterizo, justo en el punto en donde, hace unos años, el niño Humberto Carrillo fue balaceado por un agente de la *migra*. Para concluir el acto se colgó ropa ensangrentada en el cerco, en memoria de la gente que ha muerto al tratar de cruzar esta línea imaginaria.



A Hugo Sánchez le gusta el fuego... y no es metáfora. Aquí, captado *in fraganti*, en plena *Quema*, luego de encabezar una procesión que ascendió al cerro de la Altamira, portando figuras gigantes. Buena parte de estas figuras fueron hechura de Elia Arce, teatrista costarricense avencindada en Los Angeles.

AIRES TIJUANEROS

El 12 de octubre de 1991, al igual que en muchos otros lugares del continente, en Tijuana se organizó un festival para poner en tela de juicio las celebraciones del "descubrimiento" de América. El título del evento organizado por Gerardo Navarro y su Kultura Pública fue sugerente: *La venganza de Moctezuma* en honor a la diarrea que, según se dice, contraen los turistas primermundistas cuando visitan México. Con todo y sus altibajos,



La venganza tuvo el encanto de propiciar otra de esas ocasiones en las que se toma la calle, para recuperar aunque sea temporalmente su carácter de espacio para el baile y el diálogo público. En la foto, Jesús Papoleto Meléndez, poeta puertorriqueño ya con aires tijuaneros, tomándose muy en serio su papel de taño torturado por la inquisición. Esa noche *Papo* arrancó más de una lágrima a quienes lo vieron preferir el infierno antes que el cielo con los españoles.



La energía generada durante el desfile de la serpiente y la presentación de los murales siguió viva, y pronto se concretó en otro evento callejero; un trabajo colectivo de quienes habían trabajado en los eventos anteriores y de muchos amigos más. El objetivo de este acto era conmemorar, como sucedió en otras partes del país, el 20 aniversario de la matanza de Tlatelolco, uno de los sucesos que han dejado una marca profunda en la historia reciente de México. Ese día se colgaron más de diez murales que se sumaron al paisaje colorido de la céntrica y concurrida Plaza Santa Cecilia para crear un ambiente propicio, fuera cotidiano. Cuando se empezó a escuchar la música del grupo Mercado Negro la ta agarró vuelo y, por momentos, los dioses de la danza roncarrrolera poseyeron a muchos de los asistentes.

100% sangre: arte de emergencia, durante una protesta contra la guerra en el Golfo Pérsico. Tijuana, 1991.

Como parte de uno de estos eventos callejeros, un buen día fuimos testigos del viacrucis de un enmascarado.



Aquí, una de las asistentes a la inauguración de No Stomach, una exhibición organizada por la galería Installation de San Diego, sucumbe ante los encantos de Don Dineros, una gran piñata rellena de soldaditos y tanques de plástico. Don Dineros fue construido en Tijuana, y le tocó cruzar la frontera para ser parte de uno de los todavía escasos eventos artísticos en que colaboran gente de San Diego, Los Angeles y Tijuana. El maestro de ceremonias que ofició durante la quiebra de don Dineros fue Carlos Niebla, con un GI Joe de juguete como mascota.



AIRES TIJUANEROS



De cuando en cuando, como cometa, aparece por estas tierras Arturo Cipriano *pesquisando* ritmos aquí y allá: música en donde los sonidos profundos de México y América Latina se mezclan con el jazz, el blues y otros sonidos de raíz africana.



Elizabeth Cazessús, huichola postmoderna, se prepara para bailar con la música de El UN-I-VERSO, con Arturo Cipriano interpretando sus composiciones en flauta y saxofón, y Jorge Peña dándole a la batería y las percusiones hasta con los dientes. El UN-I-VERSO se presentó a mediados de 1991 en El Nopal Centenario de Tijuana y en el Teatro Ruse de San Diego.

Entre 1987 y 1989 se presentaron en Tijuana varias obras de teatro que ahora pueden apreciarse como algunos de los trabajos más frescos y creativos que se han logrado por aquí.

En la foto Raquel Presa, Iliana Ruiz y Edward Coward, en *Matar a la frívola*, obra de Coward, dirigida por Ignacio Flores de la Lama.



Una de las obras más exitosas de esta serie fue *Volver a decir Star*, escrita por Coward, de la Lama e Iliana Ruiz. En la foto, un duelo verbal en *el más allá*, entre James Dean y Marilyn Monroe, personificados por Edward Coward y Raquel Presa.



The fall of 1980 was an unexpected turn of events. Richard Sigmund had a clue. He started 552 Gallery on Fifth exhibiting the works from a core of downtown artists. Hundreds of people attended this first series of exhibits. They introduced mostly unknown work. Within that year, a decisive group of *artist run galleries* had emerged on Fifth and Sixth avenues. Not exactly the existing formula of museum and university control of how art was represented in the city. The public presence of resident artists, exhibiting in their own galleries, was an unacceptable event in San Diego's elitist culture.

1981

VI

Sushi, in its initial form as a performance and installation space on "F" Street, was the first of these new contextual venues. 552 Gallery followed next providing the greatest influence on the emergence of the next galleries to follow. Within six months 552 saw the openings of Installation Gallery, Pawnshop Gallery, and the Alternative Space Gallery. By the fall of 1981 this was to become known as the Downtown

Artist Community despite the reality of groups of artists existing in live/work spaces since the early to mid seventies. Outside the political influence of the museum and universities another art community had evolved from grass roots advocacy.

1982-1985

VII

In 1982 a second group of galleries began to form that more resembled an attitude of legitimization and commercialization. They were the David Ruetter Gallery, Thomas Neumaier Gallery, and Michael Dunsford Gallery. Multicultural Gallery and CWSS Gallery marked the beginning of grant supported programs with a more defined agenda. In time, Installation and Sushi would also follow this model of program funding. In 1983 to 1984 added Bunny Conlen Gallery, Pawnshop 2 Gallery, Patty Aande Gallery, Mark Quint Gallery, Natalie Bush Gallery, Richard Peterson Gallery, and Cygnus Gallery.

By 1985 La Jolla Museum had gained enough confidence in this arts district and opened a small satellite space where Thomas Neumaier had previously been located. This event and time marked the height of the gallery scene.

MARGINAL DISTRICT

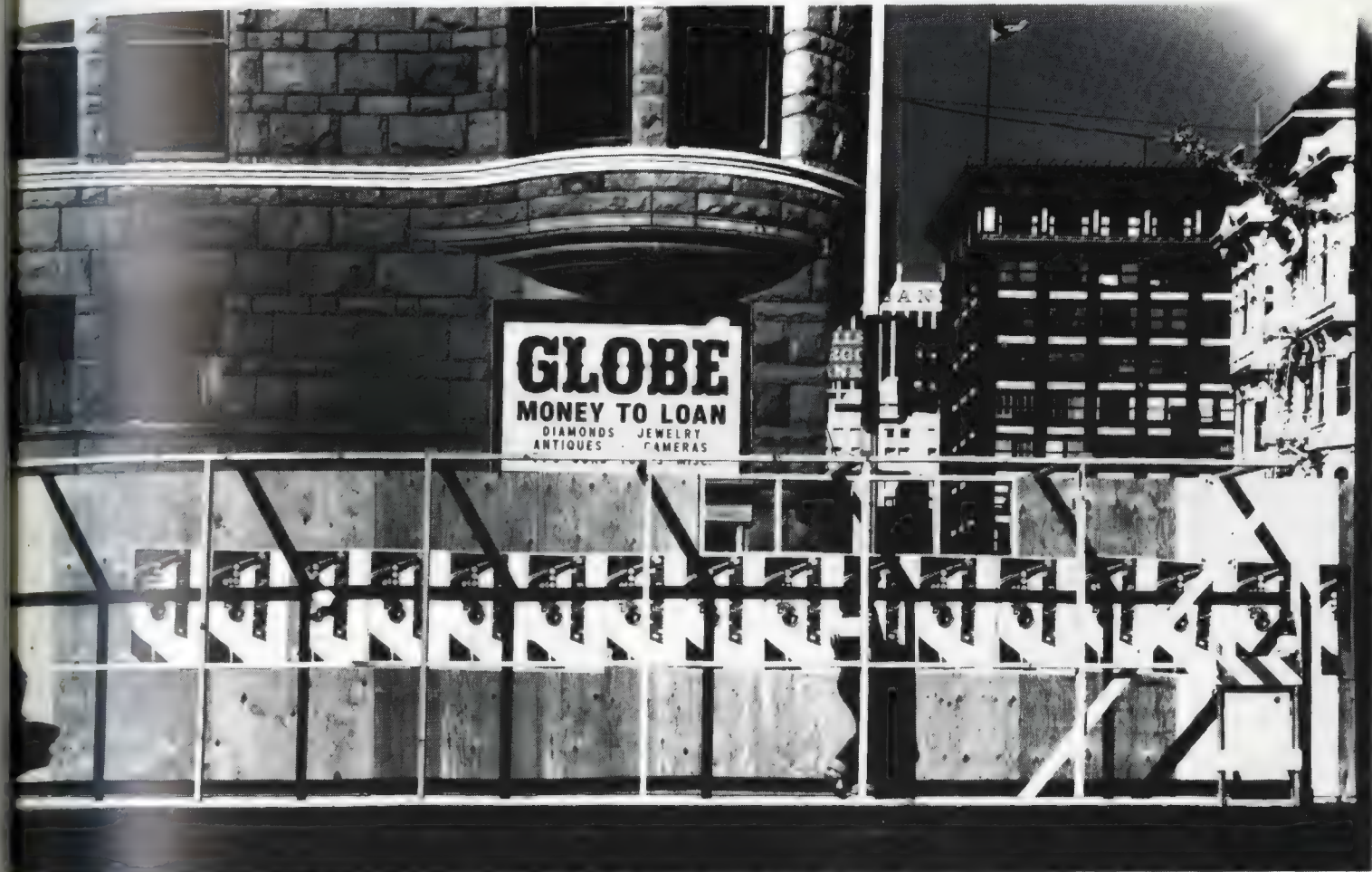
1985

VIII

As the public visibility of artists had proliferated from 1980 to 1985 so had working resident studios also diminished. Much of the reason for this was the loss of available space due to gentrification efforts and empty unaffordable space created by over-speculation. Working artists who were not previously dependent on a supportive art market to maintain workspace found unimproved space unavailable and the commercial galleries they participated in unable to provide the economic support to allow access to the new improved loft opportunities. This was becoming the new reality. Loft/living started to replace live/work utilizations.

IX

The failure of the interested public to provide support through acquisitions also unraveled the presenting art picture. What advocacy could support with little money the commercialization could not. The demeanor of the gallery going public was voyeuristic, investing interest but not the confidence to collect indigenous, and by this time, Los Angeles art. Galleries would periodically close throughout this five year history culminating in 1985 when a final blow of closings dealt a death-hand to the previous momentum of a delicate residential and presenting scene. This failure also extended to the museum establishment, whose New York-centrist chauvinisms precluded balanced recognition and validation for regional artmaking. From this perspective disinterest was justified and could be reduced to issues of local quality versus the museum's international scope. Ironically, this placed the museum in its own provincial stance, merely serving as a franchise for an international art manifesto. The universities remained silent through this dissolutionment. In a similar vein of academic chauvinism, no concern was evident in a regional communities survival or relevancy. Artists from the university programs had participated in this local community event but received no encouragement or recognition for this involvement, even being discouraged from associating with it. Ultimately much blame falls to the constraints of the free market manifesto. Those factors set the procedural agenda



for the museums, universities, and coopted the thinking that transformed an advocational community into a commodified community.

1991

X

The downtown community has run a similar cycle between the Carter recession, the Bush recession, and eleven years. The re-emergence of the advocational, artist run gallery is found in 1991 with the opening of Rita Dean Gallery, Peanut Gallery, and Onieras Gallery. Previous expectations of cultural collectivity and commercial and ideological support have been tempered with nineties objectivity. New loft buildings are being constructed from the foundation up with high rents and the promise of an appropriate environment for

the artist life style. The redevelopment propaganda now touts the arts district as a cultural amenity. The downtown community still draws a younger generation in greater numbers as an alternative for habitation and individuated work. It links this evolution to a time when naive misconceptions had not yet been proven and there was less distance from circumspection.

Gary David Ghirardi

PRECAUCIÓN



¡PARA SU PROPIA SEGURIDAD

En los últimos seis años
más de 140 personas
migrantes han muerto al
cruzar nuestras autopistas
durante la noche...

..... La oscuridad y la alta
velocidad de los autos han
puesto al chofer en una indeseable
situación en esta tragedia.

DISMINUYA SU VELOCIDAD

A 55 MPH

¡AL VERLOS YA ES MUY TARDE!

Para más información escriba a : Caltrans Public Affairs
P.O. Box 85406, San Diego, CA 92186-5406



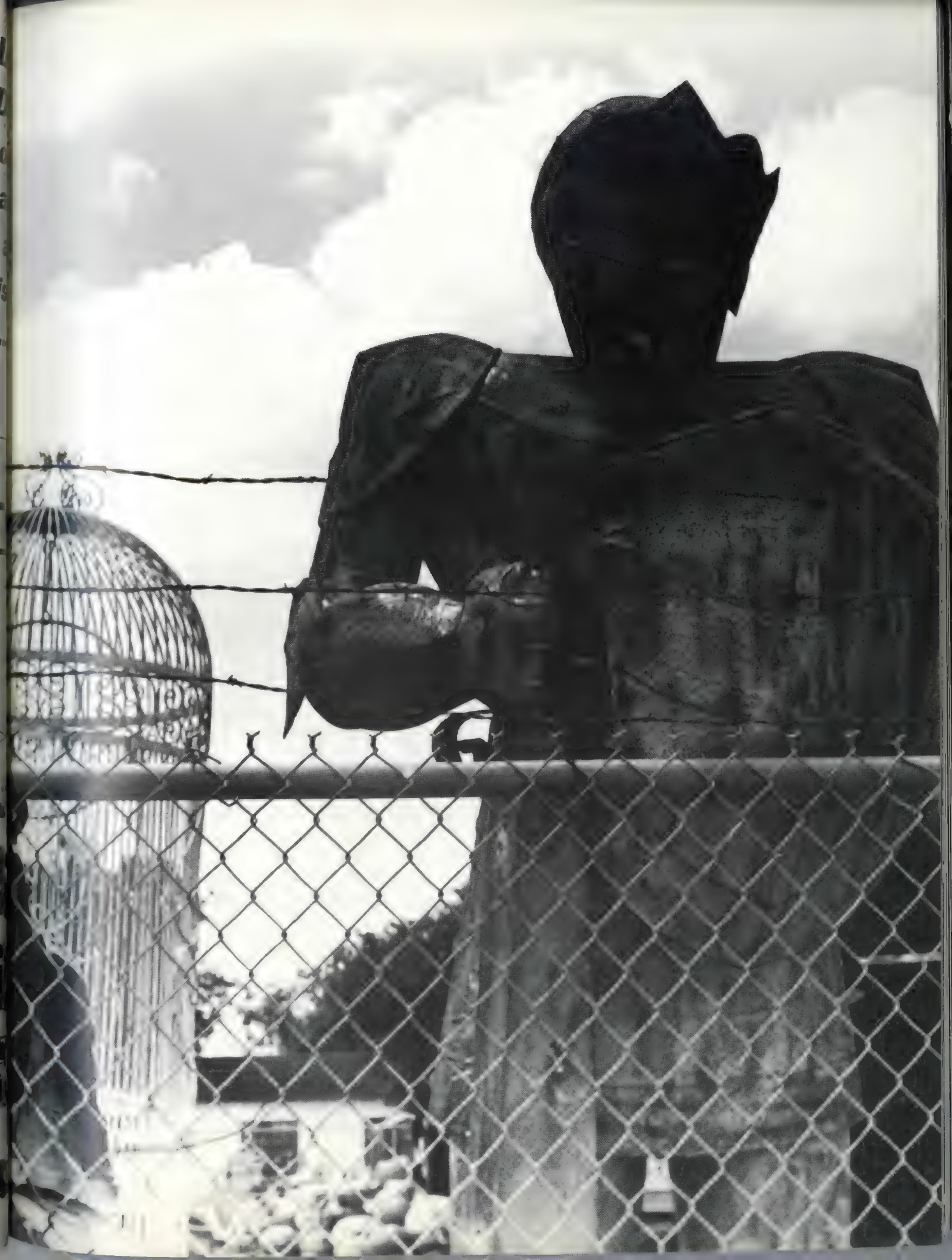
HAVE YOU RUN OVER A MEXICAN TODAY? San Diegans renewing their vehicle registrations are getting a little something extra in their DMV envelopes these days: a Caltrans flyer warning motorists not to run over illegal aliens crossing the Interstate.

The envelope stuffers, like the Interstate signs, are "crude but effective," says Caltrans Public Affairs officer Kyle Nelson. Last year 32 undocumented Mexicans were killed crossing the Interstate (17 near the border, 15 north of Oceanside). This year has brought only 7 fatalities so far. The flyers have also brought in a stream of protests and hate mail, much of it unsigned.

An envelope postmarked Van Nuys returned the flyer with the succinct message: "If these wetbacks want to cross the border illegally, they deserve what they get. It's not my problem." Another writer, also from Van Nuys, dilates upon the problem more eloquently: "Is this what you raised our Registration Fees for? Stuffing envelopes with Garbage Like This is a waste of money.... This is 140 That will Not Make The welfare rolls spray paint our walls, overwhelm our schools + hospitals."

— M.S.

San Diego Reader October 24, 1991



Broken into story
by Stephanie Heyl

I

A little girl about five or six is walking in a pink dress with lace at the collar, at the hem and on the little puffed sleeves. She is holding two by the hand and they are all walking together. Sometimes they swing their arms. All her friends are older than her. They are 15-18 year old boys. They are all dressed in dark long pants and dark long shirts. Two walk in a line behind her and two walk in front of her. They form a quadron around her. They are all walking in formation. They are walking up the middle of the highway. They are four miles from the border.

II

We were sitting in the back seat driving down the highway towards one of the three cities she lived in. She said, do you drive? I said, yes, but I don't like to. She said, I don't either. She said, the roads are all wrong, have you noticed that? These highways don't really go anywhere. They should all be rebuilt, she said, to go somewhere. The solution is to put all the highways on a ball bearing system so they can go where they want to.

III

I was making art in a classroom with lot of children. A little girl came up to me and said something so quiet I could not hear her. I squatted down close and asked her what she'd said. She repeated it and I still did not understand. I reached out and corraled someone in the classroom rushing around us covered in paint and asked for help. The translator looked at me and said, She said, Will you help me? I said, thank you and then I said, yes.

IV

I knew a young girl whose skin was old and wrinkled and rough. Her skin was as old as the sun. It seemed a part of her had burnt out or been burnt out or burnt itself. It seemed this way but it was not clear which one it was. She said, I'm much older than the other kids and we sat there in the sun room on that Sunday. We just sat there with the truth of it sitting in our laps.

V

A young girl came in the room where we were making sandwiches and stopped dead in the doorway. There were a lot of sandwiches on the table. It was a very long table and it was covered with sandwiches. She had never seen so many sandwiches in her life. She said, why did you make so many sandwiches? Someone said, these are for the homeless. She said, but why do you need to make so many? Because there are more homeless than there

are sandwiches here, someone said. No, she said, you're kidding me. We shook our heads. She looked at the door as if she wanted to run out and see for herself. I didn't think there could be that many homeless people, she said, there aren't that many where I come from. Someone said, no, there probably are. She said, I don't think so, I never saw them. Someone said, do you go out and about a lot? She stopped and thought about it. No, she said, I didn't go out much at all, I stay in the house or I'm in school.

VI

She said to me, these kids don't know where they go to school but they know the bus comes for them everyday. They don't know where they live but they know what it looks like. They don't know when they came here, but they know they came in a car. They don't know the letter names but they can draw them for you.

VII

I said, how many is we? She smiled and said, we is, uhhhh, we is fluctuating. Sometimes we is one and sometimes we is fifteen, the person behind her said, ten mostly. I said, how long have you been we? She said, how long we been living in this truck or how long we been here at all? We answered each other simultaneously. I said, been here. She said, ten years.

VIII

She said, don't let go, please don't let go. And I said, I won't let go, I promise, I won't let go. And her fingernails carved crescent moons in my arms that turned white and then red and then some shade between red and my skin color. We stood and watched transfixed. I wanted them to last: scar my skin with half moons for this moment. But they don't, they fade. Go ahead and take whatever I have. Take everything I've got and you will find it is nothing, it cannot speak, it cannot stand up for itself. It is nothing compared to this.

IX

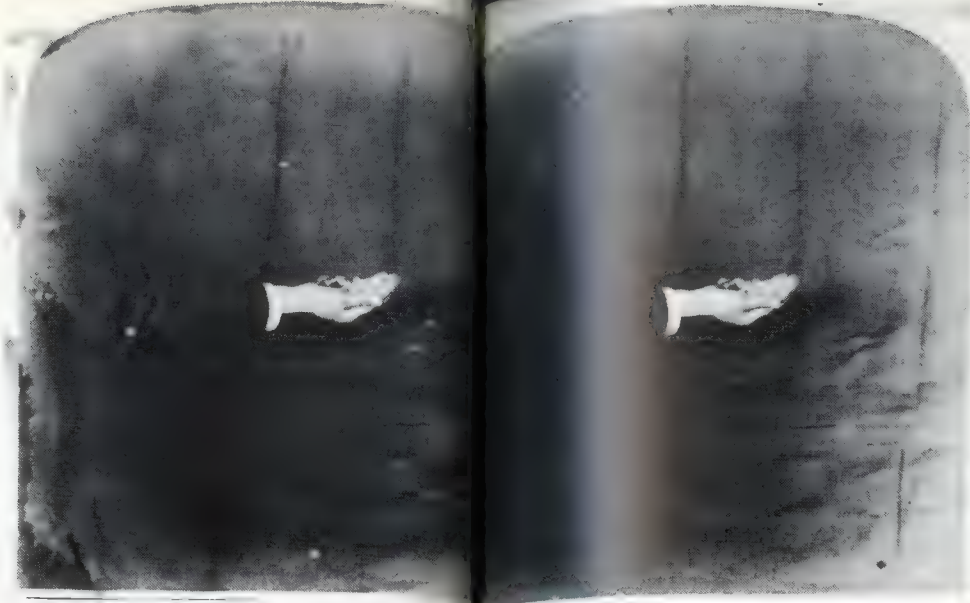
She said she'd give me a story if I painted a snake on her leg. I said, fair trade. She said she had a dream that a man was chasing her and she was running. Her parents and her brothers were with her and he was chasing them too and so they were running. The man wanted to cut off her feet she ran so fast she ran faster. He wanted to cut off all their feet and so they ran and ran and they kept running. I said, do you want gold with your red snake stripes and she said, yeah. I said, did he get you? She looked up from her leg with a smile that said, are you kidding? I should have known this was a girl who was a woman in control of her dreams.



Along the Mexico / U.S. border new groups form to battle what is now termed the "criminal alien". A legitimate topic for conferences attended by state and national legislators: "Is there a role for troops at the border?" What is produced in the media is a public mind link between crime and an immigrant population, which, but for illegal entry is largely law abiding. Euro-fascism is on the march. The barbarians are back. Must everyone go on being someone else's barbarian? Do we need our social chaos? In 1898 the Greek poet Cavafy wrote of "these 1990's". The poem, Waiting for the Barbarian, in the form of muttered questions and answers from two members of an anxious crowd. One keeps asking why strange changes are being made in the city. "Because the barbarians are coming today.", is the repeated reply. Suddenly, peoples faces grow serious and the streets are empty. Why? Cavafy's answer:

**"Because night has fallen
And the barbarians haven't come.
And some of our men just in from the border say
There are no barbarians any longer.
Now what's going to happen to us without barbarians?
Those people were a kind of solution."**





**CORRESPONDENCIAS ENTRE DOS CUERPOS, DOS LENGUAS
A EL FIN DEL SIGLO/ CORRESPONDENCES BETWEEN TWO
BODIES, TWO TONGUES AT THE END OF THE CENTURY**

Dear Friend. The first snow falls on Chicano Chicago, 18th street, the gateway to Pilsen is suddenly transformed into an ethereally dusted boulevard.

*¡Compañero! El aire de la ciudad está muerto. (vanda)
Dios está en los cielos, la tierra pierde su espíritu.*

Friend. I am an unprepared archivist, collecting experiences, shuffling down the clotted street. Because I don't know this or that, only pretend to, the outside of the buildings wince at my passing.

Compañero. Tú eres el autor de tu discurso. El tuyo es una teoría turística.

Translations: Columbus Day/ *Día de la Raza* Passenger pigeon/ *Paloma Silvestre Norte Americana* Pastiche/ *Pastiche*

My friend. I travel the same routes as the conquistadores. Me looking at you looking at me.

Amigo mío. Con la invención e identificación de un enemigo te creas una fantasía de comunidad.

Friend. I stand by this boundry, it is a space of alibis and history here is simply a litany of inscriptions on an empty container.

Amigo. Me refuso a dividir la palabra y la visión. El poder de la visión no es absoluto

Translations: To Sigh/ *Suspirar* Monkey/ *Mono* Culture/ *Cultura*

Comrade. These are holy days of obligation. I promise you a warm embrace from my shadow.

Compañero. Cada cosa sagrada en su lugar. No quiero subvertir esta dualidad.

Comrade. My spanish hides from me at the simplest of interactions, these are the cruellest of days that give so much without explanation.

Compañero. Un instructor fascista marcha a paso de ganso en torno a mi memoria. Al Norte del Rio Bravo, mi cultura está exilada de su tierra nativa.

Translations: Suckfish/ *Pequeño Pez del Pacifico* Exodus/ *Emigración* Inexorable/ *Inexorable*

Friend. Today the sun rose like a human being, tonight we'll fall off the world, tonight we'll fall off the world.

Amigo. Bebe de mi boca, las letras de muchas lenguas.

Friend. As we lose the specific, everything must become generic.

Amigo. Entonces, pronto todo serán ruinas pictóreas.

Translations: Picture postcard/ *Tarjeta postal con Foto* Picture tube/ *Tubo de imagen* Death Rattle/ *Estertor Agónico*

Like a creeping charlie he came on a white tag sale. Like the wind that airlifted Yersinia Pestis to the Black House dog. Like the diamond petals that rain in an endless hail onto the foreheads of the mullet sodomizers. Like the Roquefort stench of an in house bingo game on a reservation linked to charity. Like the fibrous unknown within the spitwad of the dictator. Like the buck and wing crazies on the hooch by the Jew in The Cow. Like sewage poured from a crack in the sky to feed the coprophagous hunchback brigade. Like weasels in small pockets he came.

Ledif ocol O! Might you have seen may you have guessed could you have known odor tinkering it took laden cross pork and veal. That against night sky sheiks and bells of the bella you would mooningly nourish genoacide. For teen hun's dread and nine detours led to a string octet from Xiang province rendering Shostakovich's Lenin and Stalin on licorice cellos discarding music for mortgage. Marshmallow cymbals were rolled uptown by naked indigians in desperate need of reform. A conversion. A diversion. A perversion. Now straight in blackened bangs and coiffed Spanish cocky doos prance among the crucifixes and rosary beads. They found the wine not at all to their taste. "Too much blood in it..." they sighed as they were swatted with a cat O' nine tails for their impertinence.

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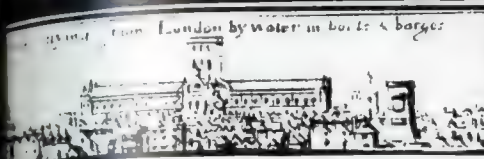
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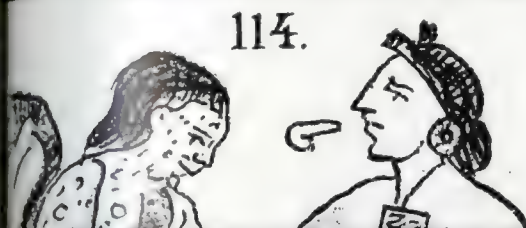
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The Hominiverous ink trappers lay in state by the dermis for the goddess of the stream. Undulated flash of toucan turd floated incessant and in received. Around her toes she could feel swirling microbes in open distaste of the sound of Andaluz. Above her scalp the wilted particulate lay waste to the Jerry time magic rig of her youth. A sallow mod grenadier flashed by eating chalk out of a baba mould on the kidneys of a time release coupon. "Next!" he cried as a threatening plume of dustcloud death sprang forth from his mouth to claim squatter's rights on the innermost alveoli of the ink trapper's son. "Revenge!" they cried, leaving the stream goddess's head to hoot fancy bubbles beneath the skimming insects of her cord.



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Plunderous Hibiscus and Bandinage in Murderous well torn Gait.

Again you open peeling skin to seek division of the entrance. The blue bodied dead of passage lings cry "Churl! Paynim! Black-eyed Susan!" at the homunculating centaur's approach. In clouds of sub-atomic alphabet a descendant quill finds acrimony in the belching forth of death. Emissions: Sulphur Tartar Phlogiston Benzene Monoxide Dioxide. One. God. Omissions: Ninety Million Finding Finder's Found. Admissions: None. And it was an anus that led the foundation and the frankpledge. Into groups of decadactyled dish pot long time confab swank piss gang rape monkey guilt the virgin worshipping bead touching practitioners of reverse medicine came papillus vine and rife.

Whilst notching staffs of oaken yew alleged to be of Midas they glanced across a monadistic Pawnee's sniperscope and tapped on their helmets with chopsticks. "Again!" frayed the bearded phlebotomic melon desperately attempting echo location of the miracle, the parks, the Christmas kings, the courts of Indiana, the lorries, the airy stones and the bizarre cheese of the Maldives.



1

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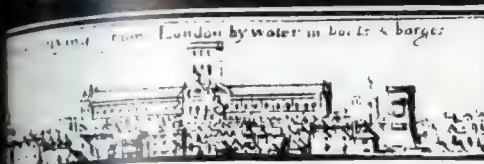
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A single deaf mute lighted torch in preparation of its nascent censure. No lover of three tacos in a vortex nor tines in leeward execration would dare to come forth to inquire of the god: "Did Christ sneeze on the cross?"

A thunderous pall rowing even toed hegemony come crashing through their dream. In beta rays and future pies the severed hands held fruit. In tresses crying blackened foul the bleeding child asked for permission to go to the toilet and was sealed in the bottomless scrotum of a genuine lycanthrope.

With pins on and toenails dragging in the sea his unkempt dread did lock its door. An exchange. A deliverance. A maniac in tights and slaving found six men on the way to Seville. "In a dance," said the colon of its hairy tungsten hound. "see how I circle his eyes with my crayon." But a shadow fell upon him and luck did not visit him again for five centuries.

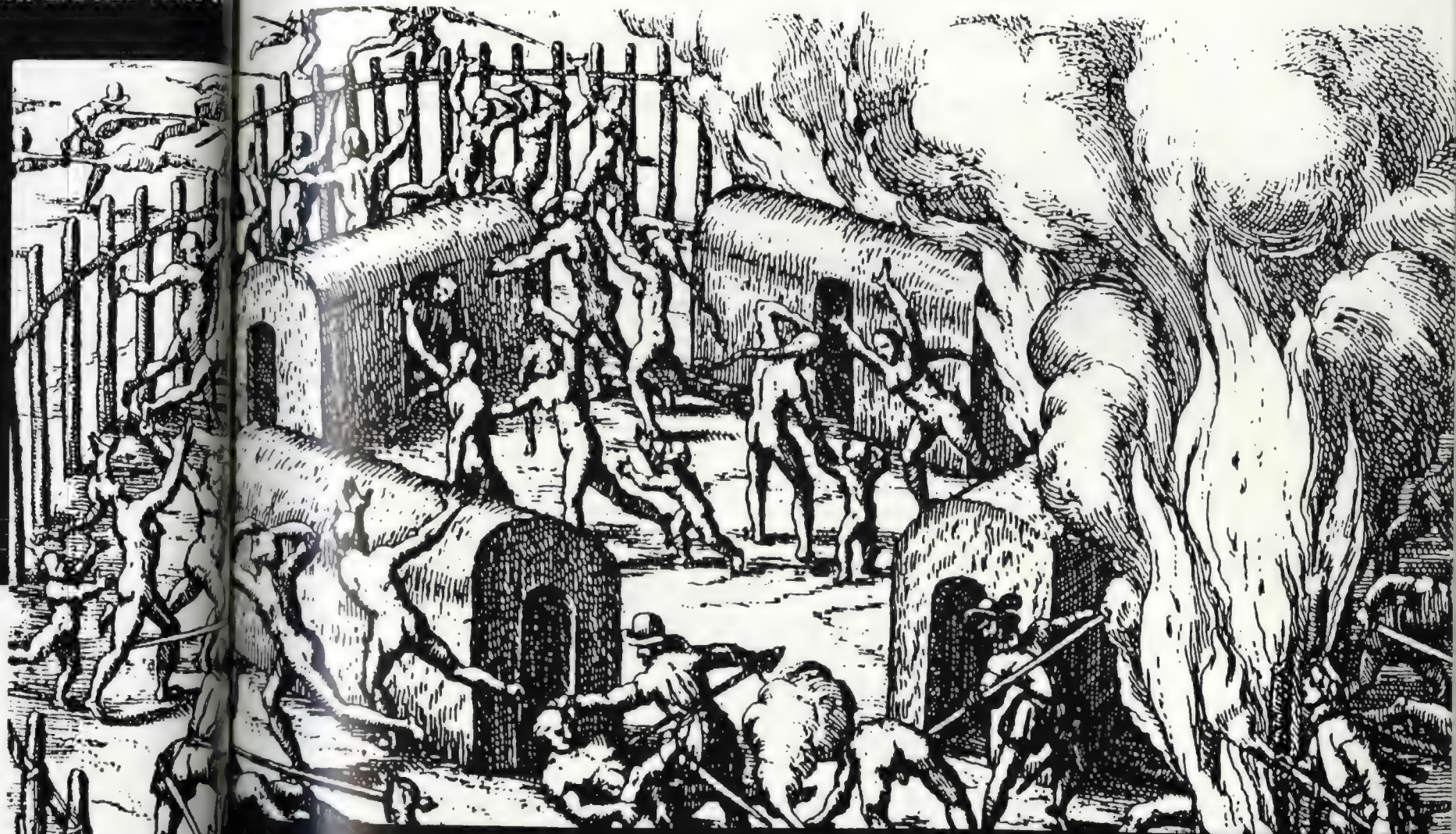


3

Esconced in textured flattened eels no ray reflects its liturgy.

Jack Tar mission fuck a bang lost lica daddy. Fine ribbon culture typy seeks break from umbilical cooties. Pound a foot and Spanish heel on a broken dark baby dream. "YAW!" shuffled Strand Watie on he saw his very head severed by a good solid sword from Toledo. "Na giga madi!" Godayelaga! "The vitality of the dynasties waned as it was a relic and should not have been eaten. Ovicious brood! Summon gorge-de-pigeon cum Sikh derision. Zuckawanna! Aechyloo, the Jady's not for burning. Four polonium rednecks / changed the death trap mish-ton of the cigarette jones. Subcutaneous homesick hogs poked a hymen in the libure of the Ford and gaped out at the plantation in awe. If you listened close enough you might have heard them tittering. A chevron on the udder of a Japanese shingle in consolably mooned. The spitted continental synapse grew larger. Silence prevailed among the Happyland clobs of our time.

Are you back? Can you sense the indiscriminate use of gender? Do you fear that ossified lake? Is it becoming that which cannot seem itself unto rhinoceros? Opiate leather. Short order, lican tupperware. Jock hard into the impenetrable part and judge the beauty contest of slaughter. See the corpses prance in the swamant competition. See the inert flesh provide for talent. Smell the crotches of degenerative rot. A legacy of dressing. A meaningless forgiv-of. Cry tears of lecithin and microtallons to feign the chastened trout.



12

The liver embossed with the footprints of a Hotchkiss snuggled deep within the laetrile leaking five dollar doily. His forehead left galaxian drops of relegated pod to potentiate and mound at the nanogram lisp. How quickly withdrawn were the ludenteller brazzaballs from the prudence and sapphire of the mass. The priests curled their toes as the Epiphany deceived. Brutish flesh fell from the trees as fast as could the uninvited guests consume it. The guests immediately exchanged name tags and confused the hosts who divided and fell before the inexorable nostrils of greed. Sensing victory, the conquistadores loosened their breeches and allowed themselves to be viciously bugged by a trilingual vicuña inviolately screeching "Burn. Pinocchio! Burn!"

James C. Carter, 1988

In Fourteen Hundred and Ninety two
Christopher Columbus sailed the ocean blue

**Today he's seen as a hero and he's celebrated
but his place in history is way overrated**

He stumbled into a land that was already inhabited

but in only four years half of the natives were dead.

He led a butchery that continued long after his death

Almost 90 million lives lost in the aftermath

He enslaved all the Indians to steal all the gold

A lot of the natives were even sold

**When they didn't bring enough gold to meet his demands
he would punish the slaves by chopping off their hands.**

No matter how much he had he always wanted more.

If they couldn't supply, he had some torture in store.

Just to show 'em that he had some clout

he burned every soul until marrow came out.

He spread his tyrannies through the entire New World

and through day and night screams could be heard.

The voice of millions of Arawaks screaming to be spared

only to meet their end by someone who never cared.

He used hunting dogs to kill men to fit their game

so when the Indians revolted, man, who was to blame?

After all those things that he did and he stole

he claimed that he was right, because they had no soul.

What kind of a man would carry on this way

and this we celebrate today?

**This is another case of poor education
rewritten history fooling a nation**

In schools today kids are taught to believe

there were many things Columbus did achieve

**but what he truly achieved was only pure bloodshed,
treachery, theft, torture, Alright enough said.**

The point is the things he did and took

are never mentioned in a history book

Instead people today are taught to think

that Columbus was a hero and to honor him.

If you understood the facts then you would know

a Columbus celebration should be a no go.

After all the Indians he tortured and ravaged,

tell me people, who was the real savage?

The truth is Columbus was nothing

but a butcher, a liar, a thief, a barbarian

who ushered in an era of complete tyranny

where Indians were killed or taken for slavery.

He called them **hostile** 'cause when provoked they fought.

These are the things that we were never taught.

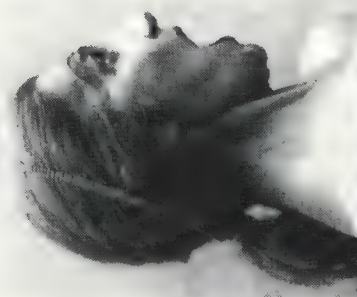
It's hard to realize that schools were hatched

for kids to learn not to be brainwashed.

Society can learn from its past mistakes

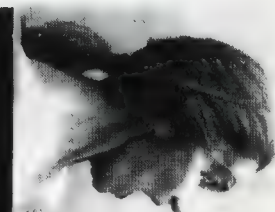
but they must be acknowledged, not changed or faked.

I want to see you once again
I confess the pride of my doubt
my selfmarginalization
I recognize your ability to kill
your ability to enter
without being noticed
your messiahnic tricks



I understand the scrutiny
of your condition
the perturbation
of your secondary effects
my body narrates you
but it hasn't been a benevolent
programme

to your naturalistic appearance
my esoteric figurativism
to my passionnal span
your agonistic game



500 marks of unwholeness
at the border of an other millenium
we must break our implicit
contract



Exhibition 1:
Statue of Liberty, Plaza Independencia, Montevideo, Argentina
by the Argentinian sculptress: LILA NGIA (1935-1995).
Model: Valentina Prokhor, mother, sculptress, angel teacher.
In: "Arte", Esp. "Arte y Cultura", No. 100
La Plata, Argentina, 1991.

“A woman in San Marcos told her children to go into the house when we walked by because the wetbacks were coming,” said José Zavala, who worked at a Carlsbad tomato farm last season with Florencio Morales. “She told her children we would catch them and kidnap them and eat them. People here are very racist. When Americans come to Mexico, we do not treat them like this.”

Weekly Reader

Volume 65
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Feb. 27, 1987

Edition 5



People from Mexico sneak across river into the United States.

ILLEGAL ALIENS

Still Move into U.S. Despite New Law

See story on page 3.

Voz Fronteriza

VOZ FRONTERIZA. 1976-1981

By Susana Martinez

The year was 1977, the time 3:00 Am on a crisp Spring morning along the San Ysidro/Tijuana border. A group of young students, sleepy-eyed and with a stack of newspapers tucked under their arms, descended onto a still-dark parking lot. Their mission: to distribute free copies of the bilingual *Voz Fronteriza* to the Mexican farmworkers boarding school-type labor buses on their way to the fields of San Diego's North County. It was a typical distribution campaign but we were not ordinary students. We attended UCSD and published *Voz Fronteriza* between 1976-1981 out of a small office in the Student Organizations building. We were the sons and daughters of migrant farm workers, cannery workers, factory workers and from other working class families. We were the products of the hard-fought battles of the "Chicano" movement of the 60's and 70's, to democratized and open the Universities to students from diverse backgrounds. The University fed our voracious appetite for "truths" after years of being deneid our history and spoon-fed "culture of poverty" theories by the U.S. public school systems. Our political and social consciousness was naturally drawn to leftist, Marxist leanings, considering our background and the time period involved. We were intellectuals in formation, coming of age in historically transcendental times. *Voz* became our outlet.

Since the premiere of its first issue "Chale con el Bicentennial" in early 1976, *Voz* was committed to the practice of socially-relevant journalism, aiming to capture and reflect, not only student, but community interests and aspirations. The Mexican community we supported is a special one, one divided by an international border. A place where direct confrontation with military forces occurs on a daily basis. The presence of

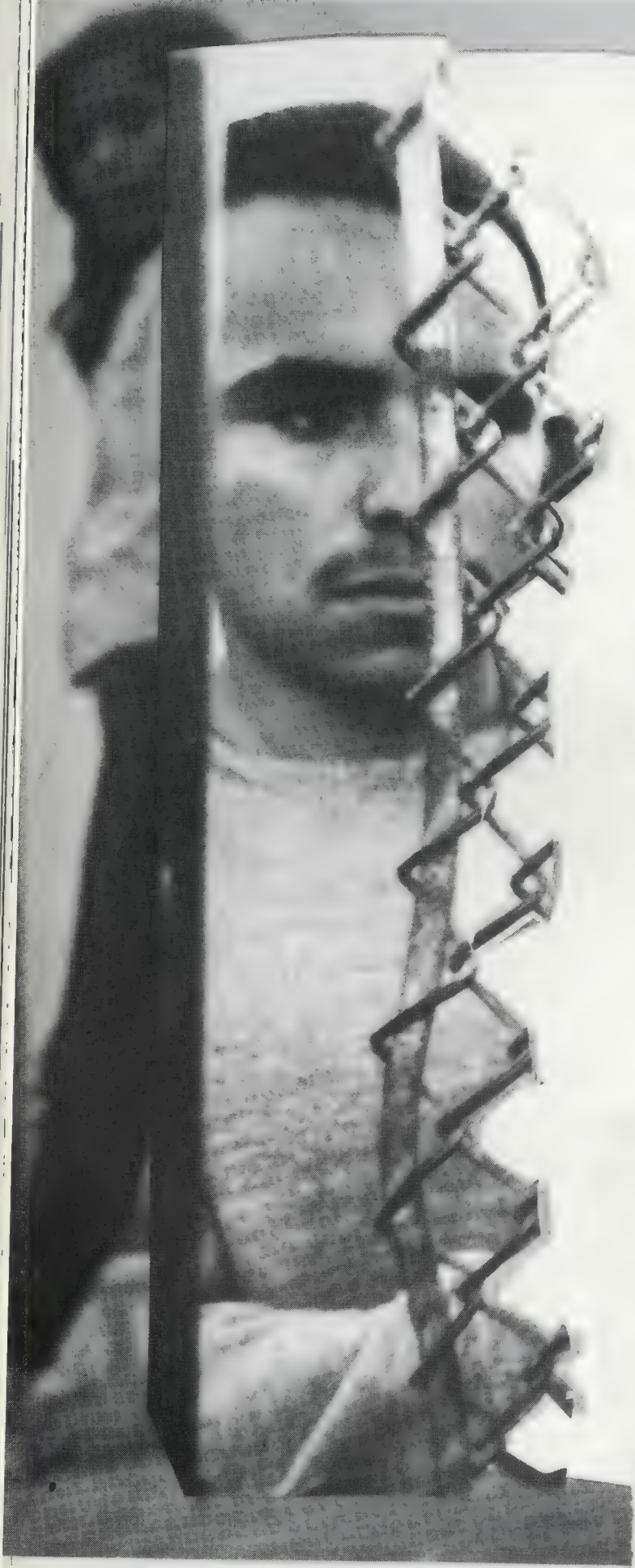
the Border Patrol, U.S. Armed Forces, Nazis and KKK conjure a volatile situation, specially when these forces attempt to protect "our borders and the American way" with no respect for human rights. The reality in the border communities is particularly harsh with la migra patrolling day and night. To attain first hand experience, *Voz* members ventured into the frontlines at the border where hundreds of people, men, women and children, gather nightly to start the dangerous, sometimes life-threatening journey north. While capturing these images on film, cameras were snatched from our hands by paranoid Border patrolmen who questioned our identity and why we were on the "enemie's" side. Fulfilling our committment to community become our banner. We maintained that we were one people regardless of what we chose to call ourselves and that all borders, including those in our minds, should be abolished. Ideas that were labelled (extremelly) radical at the time are no longer far-fetched today, considering the destruction in 1990 of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of the German people. *Voz* made genuine efforts to link struggles on both sides of the border; investigating the maquiladora phenomena and supporting work stoppages at Solidev and Solitron in Tijuana. The issues of worker safety, working conditions and enviromental hazards are still effective today in light of the proposed Free Trade Agreement. When heavy winter rains flooded out "cartolandia" on Tijuana's riverbed, we crossed the border to show solidarity and report on their situation and relief needs. These are only a few amongst many examples of our participation in community struggles on both sides of the border.

While *Voz Fronteriza* continues to be published today, its history of publication between 1976-1981 was certainly its most glorious as "prensa comprometida con el pueblo".

Squirrel

there b no
easy chair
in this here
country what
i call bomb
they call
a fair
if there ever
b life in tree
i call air
have no rhythm
have no rhyme
no rock
no stone
have heart
have people
b not much
to hawk, bald
eagle naught
someone rise
beyond storm
thy steeple
love not anyone
meaningless
treasure persons
cross the mire
too much toilet
paper in the fire
stink like skunk
confucius say
carp out cooking
off thy nile
b no river
russian blast
starve not
sense sanity
clarity, no jelly bean
tonight, perhaps
a light out thy cave
pyramid survive
barfull lawyers
and writs for
the live, habeas
corpus fit
to behave
honey, hide the powder
on thy third eye
forehead

Alurista



I
was
looking
for
she



I was looking for SHE.
- years later,
as still crossing.
ips she never arrived
I had crossed never
return.



Five
Iw
Perhc
or -
to

HUMAN PREY



"ALIENS ARE LIVE BAIT. THEY'RE JUST OPEN FIELD. WHO ARE THEY GOING TO COMPLAIN TO? THEY SHOULDN'T BE HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE. PERSONALLY, I DON'T HAVE NOTHIN' AGAINST ILLEGAL ALIENS PERSONALLY, BUT I'M NOT AFRAID TO SHOOT 'EM."

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Computation and Language Skills Program

BERKELEY • DAVIS • IRVINE • LOS ANGELES • RIVERSIDE • SAN DIEGO • SAN FRANCISCO



SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

TO THE EDITOR:

LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA 92093

In the aftermath of the recent airing of Fox Network's "The Reporters," a number of newspaper articles and television news stories have focused public attention on the fallout resulting from that show's depiction of youth paramilitary groups playing war games on the U.S./Mexican border. Much of the debate centers on the alleged manipulation of the teenagers engaged in hunting undocumented Mexican workers by the producers of "The Reporters." School officials, teachers, parents and the students of Mar Vista High School are enraged and bewildered at the situation in which they now find themselves; their good names and reputations damaged by "irresponsible journalism." The subsequent discussion in the media has shielded "the children," taking them to task for being engaged in an activity and in an area which might prove dangerous TO THEM. Additionally, that same media has focused its attention on the charges and countercharges of manipulation, shifting attention from the more disturbing issues raised in the television report.

Unlike a society based on the printed word, a society whose public discourse is shaped by television will find it nearly impossible to maintain a clear, analytic discussion of a problem as complex as that presented in "The Reporters" broadcast of "Human Prey." As a culture, we remain focused only on the latest image or news report coming through our television sets. By the six o'clock news tonight we will have forgotten what we saw on t.v. (or thought) the night before. We cannot understand the causes of events or their historical context because so many of us do not read or avail ourselves of other systems of information which might shed light on current events. Therefore we fail, often willfully, to understand the history of our neighbors, ourselves, our economic system and its relationship to foreign economies and, most importantly, our system of government and its guarantees to citizen and non-citizen alike. Television, by its very nature, is not equipped to deal with these complexities. It is a tool for communication with severe limitations as all those interested in the issues raised by "The Reporters" are beginning to see.

What then did we see, those of us who witnessed the broadcast of "Human Prey?" In spite of the allegations of manipulation leveled against the producers of "The Reporters," the program was a chilling and powerful reminder of the cruelty and terror we are capable of inflicting, both as individuals and as a society, when we reduce those who we imagine are not like us to the "Other." Undocumented Mexican or Latin American workers, stripped of their humanity, can be hunted like animals with a clear conscience. It is important to remember that the report focused, not only on teenage paramilitary groups, but on adult vigilantes who have also made the border their perverse playground.

Astonishingly, there has been almost no discussion of the men who have taken their military experience and translated it into some imagined combat with undocumented workers. The style and level of language used to describe the border --as a war zone where violence and drugs threaten to spill into good, honest American neighborhoods--gives tacit permission to society to engage in vigilante activity. However, democracy and vigilantism cannot exist together; one must always cancel out the other. These adults, engaged in acts of terror against men, women and children, have stepped outside the laws of this society,

both in fact and in spirit, and all members of that society must demand that these activities cease. Not to speak up is to approve of this unspeakable injustice. Surely as American we can do, must do, better.

It is unfortunate, and unconscionable, that the television media, print media, politicians, government officials and civil authorities use the powerful tool of language to distract the citizenry from real issues, rather than using it to enlighten. Examples of this can be heard in the metaphors of war used to describe the complex issues of drugs, economics and immigration. Emotionally charged words and phrases such as flood, invasion, a human tide, aliens, illegal, tortilla curtain, badlands, and war zone are routinely used to describe the area of the border and the movement of undocumented workers. More sinister and subtle has been the linking of two unrelated issues: the illegal drug trade, and immigration for purposes of obtaining employment. This linkage has led to serious and damaging consequences for undocumented workers and for an American society based on a system of equal justice under the law. We see the results of hysteria and hyperbole in communities all over San Diego County: an atmosphere of mistrust, fear and hatred.

At the same time there has been a failure of public discourse and public leadership in addressing the issues of racism and vigilantism brought out by the broadcast. These incidents reflect longstanding attitudes deeply embedded in the citizenry of San Diego County. The silence of local politicians, civic and religious leaders is a moral failure with enormous implications for the future. Why has no public figure spoken out against the disturbing incidents depicted in "The Reporters?" Again, failure to speak out against injustice gives tacit approval to those who commit injustice. We need only look toward Hitler's Germany.

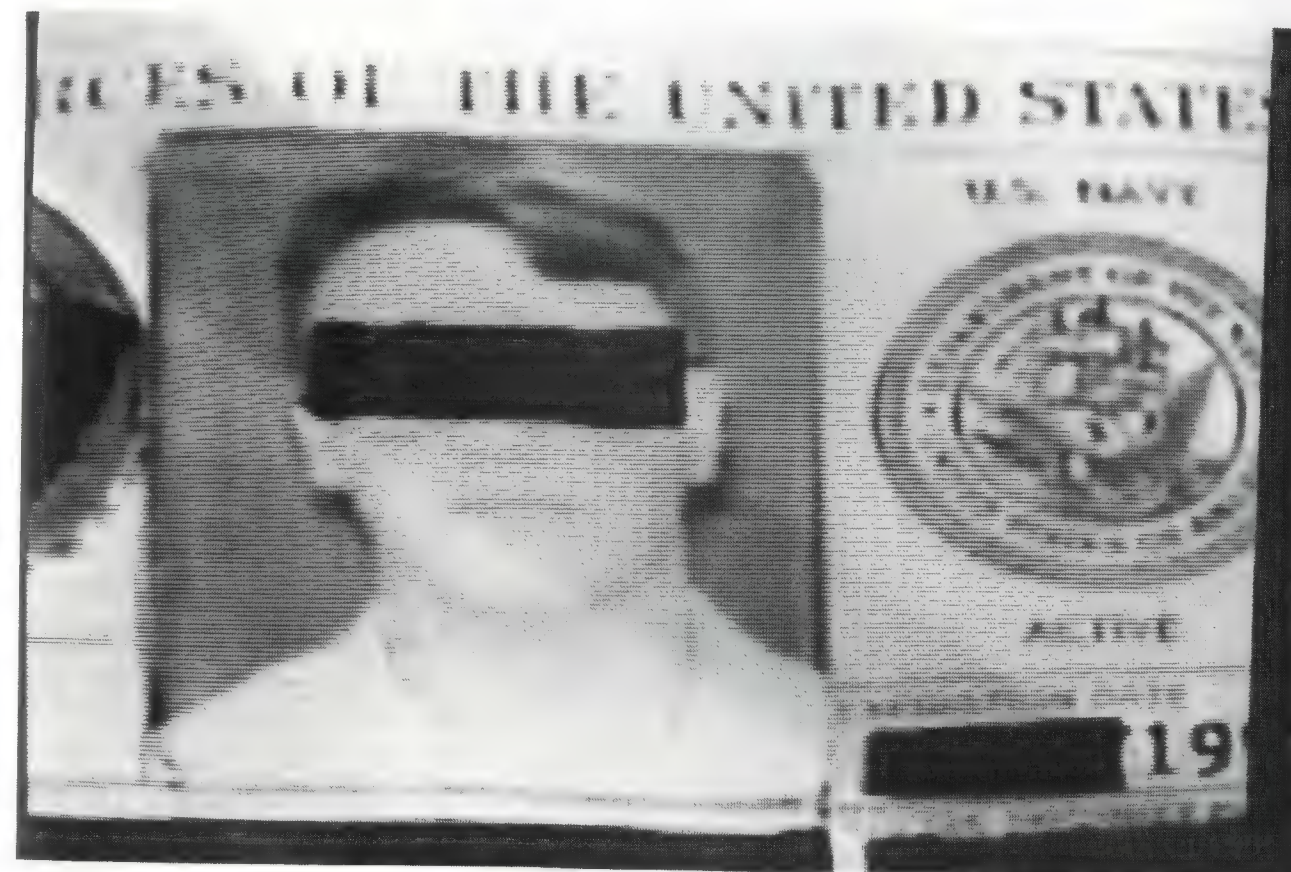
But perhaps more disturbing is the inability of the average citizen to grasp the complexity of issues raised by the broadcast, and the unwillingness of those same citizens to deal with aspects of society which are unpleasant and uncomfortable. We are enraged that our children are being "manipulated" by the media, but we refuse to think deeply about racism and the escalating violence against undocumented workers. We fail to see the connection between the human rights violations being committed by American citizens, and its resulting threat to our entire system of justice and fair play. Perhaps it is stating the obvious, but the American legal system safeguards the welfare of all individuals within its borders, citizen and non-citizen alike. We need to remind ourselves and others that a system of law and justice cannot be undermined by the misguided prejudices and hatred of individual citizens taking the law into their own hands. In spite of protests to the contrary, war games are NOT games but a reflection of an aggressive society. It is only a small step from teenagers hunting undocumented workers with paint pellet guns to adult vigilantes who maim, terrorize and kill.

We therefore strongly protest the activities of teenage paramilitary groups, adult vigilantes, the sensationalized use of language used to describe immigration, the failure of public discourse to adequately deal with the racism of San Diego County, and the silence of public and school officials who should be investigating and speaking out against these types of activities. As students representing a variety of cultural backgrounds and as citizens of a democratic society, we must speak out against this violation of human rights occurring in our backyard.

Sincerely,

The Computation and Language Skills Program, University of California

"WHATEVER IT TAKES, IT IS OUR JOB TO PROTECT OUR BORDERS. AS AN AMERICAN CITIZEN, IF YOU DIDN'T, THEN YOU'D BE WRONG, 'CAUSE YOU'D BE LETTING A CONVICT, OR ILLEGAL, WHICH IS THE SAME THING, COME ACROSS INTO OUR COUNTRY."



"ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS PULL OUT ANY KIND OF WEAPON THAT CAN FIRE AUTOMATIC OR SEMI-AUTOMATIC ROUNDS, HAVE THEM ALL LAY DOWN ON THEIR BACKS, TAKE THEIR STUFF, AND, IF YOU WANT TO KILL 'EM, YOU KILL 'EM. IF YOU DON'T WANT TO KILL 'EM, YOU CAN EITHER WOUND 'EM OR DO WHATEVER YOU WANT."

Tijuana has grown like a deformed child that has been injected anabolics, but only in the arm of the economy. The disproportion between the industrial/economic growth and the cultural evolution of Tijuana is the same as between an emerging metropolis and a small province. In the 90's more local artists are being disillusioned as the mirage of the institutionalized cultural desert vanishes; others continue lending themselves to perpetuate the myth of the tragic artist to justify the paychecks of inept officials in exchange for a fistful of publicity. The local reality is that most artists, actors, musicians and poets practice trades different to their vocations or must work and study in San Diego to compensate for the lack of gratifying cultural jobs, the absence of grants, workshops, professional visual arts studies and facilities. The resistance and the internal energy of the Tijuana artist is born out of coping, like the cactus and the coyote, with an existence between the outer limits of two cultures.

Tijuana a crecido como un niño deforme al que se le han "inyectado anabólicos", tan sólo en el brazo económico. La vida empresarial de la ciudad es de una metrópoli pujante y la vida cultural es de una provincia. Algunos artistas locales se continúan ilusionando con los espejismos del desierto oficial sin concebir que la cultura en la nomenclatura estatal es solo la etiqueta del mito del "artista trágico" utilizado para justificar las nóminas. La realidad común es que muchos artistas, actores, músicos y poetas practican en la localidad oficios ajenos a su vocación, otros tenemos que trabajar o a estudiar en los Estados Unidos para superar la austeridad de trabajos culturales remunerantes, la ausencia de becas, de talleres, de programas de estudios artísticos superiores en la ciudad. La resistencia y la energía interna de los artistas de Tijuana nace de una existencia aceptada a vivir en el límite como las bisnagas y el coyote.

Gerardo Navarro
 "La Venganza de Moctezuma"/conclusiones,
 Diario Baja California,
 18 de Noviembre de 1991





Pacific Southwest Region
980 N. Fair Oaks Ave.
Pasadena, California 91103
(818) 791-1978

American Friends Service Committee

US/Mexico Border Program
Immigration Law Enforcement Monitoring Project
June 7, 1991.

The US/Mexico Border Program of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) has for the last three years formed part of a national AFSC project called The IMMIGRATION LAW ENFORCEMENT MONITORING PROJECT (ILEMP). ILEMP has, through local immigrant and civil rights coalitions and AFSC offices in five regions along the US/Mexico border, generated statistics reported by victims of abuse during the enforcement of immigration laws. The statistics, comprising May 5, 1989 to May 4, 1991, were generated by a computer database called "WINSTON," a program especially written for this purpose.

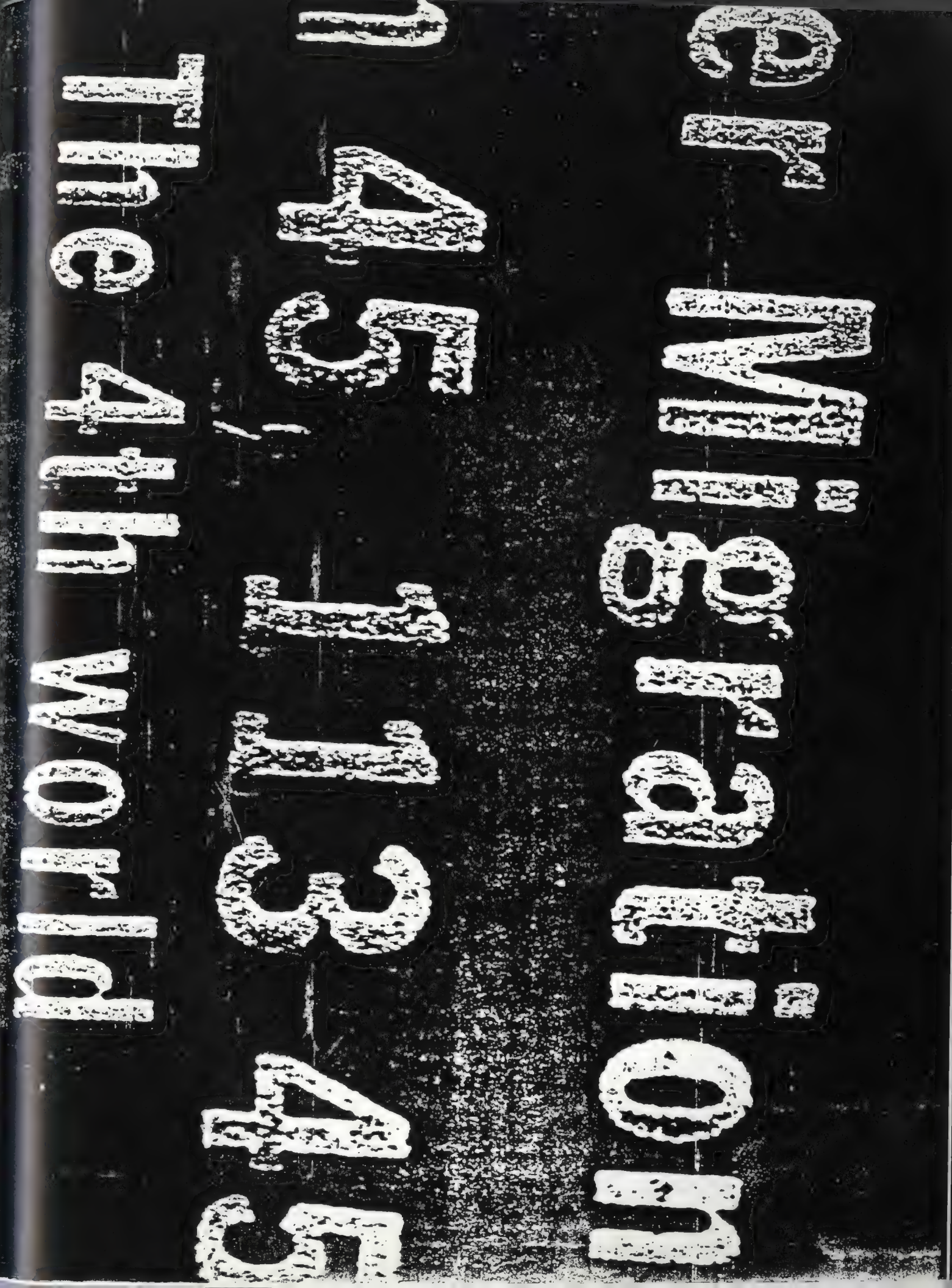
For San Diego, the only region for which statistics will be released today, 405 abuses were reported by 149 victims, an average of 2.7 abuses per victim. Of the abuses (see attached) reported, 36.8% were physical abuses, 36.5% psychological or verbal abuses, 6.7% were abuses related to the deprivation of liberty, 5.2% were inappropriate search and seizure abuses, 8.6% were denial of due process abuses, 2.5% were seizure or destruction of property abuses, and 3.7 were others not classified.

Of the 405 abuses reported, 73.4% (297) were committed by the US Border Patrol, 9.6% (39) by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, 9.1% (37) by US Customs, 5.9% (24) by local Law Enforcement Agencies (eg. San Diego PD, National city PD, etc.), 1.5% (6) by Military (National Guard) and 0.5% (2) by "others." If we were to combine the Border Patrol with the INS, these two agencies alone committed 83% (336) of the total reported abuses.

Of the victims whose immigration status was known (137 out of 149), 22.6% were US Citizens, 8.7% were either permanent or temporary residents (amnesty), 64.2% were undocumented and 4.5% either had passports, political asylum or were applicants for various types of status.

Of the victims whose ethnicity was known (127 out of 149), 3.9% (5) were Anglo American (US Citizens), 18.9% (24) were Mexican American (also US Citizens), 76.4% (97) were Mexican and 0.8% (1) were Salvadoran.

It is very significant to note a few things: First, while it was to be expected that the majority of the victims would be undocumented, we never expected that such a high number would be both US Citizens and legal residents (31.3%). Second, if we look at the ethnicity of the US Citizen victims, we see that 82.8% (24 of 29) were Mexican American. Third, 95.3% (121 of 127) of all victims whose ethnicity was known were either Mexican or of Mexican descent. Fourth, if we cross reference types of abuses with immigration status of the victims, we find that US Citizens and Legal Residents suffered a disproportionately high number of abuses as compared to the other groups.



Border Art Workshop/Taller de Arte Fronterizo

Membership Chronology December 1991

David Avalos	11/84-11/87
Victor Ochoa	11/84-11/89
Michael Schnorr	11/84
Isaac Artenstein	11/84-11/86
Jude Eberhart	11/84-11/86
Guillermo Gomez-Peña	11/84-11/89
Sara-Jo Berman	11/84-11/87
Philip Brookman	5/85-5/86
Marco Vinicio Gonzalez	2/86-5/86
Emily Hicks	9/87-11/89
Robert Sanchez	11/87-7/90
Berta Jottar	11/87-11/89, 3/90-7/90
Richard Lou	7/88-7/90
Rocio Weiss	9/88-11/89
Carmela Castrejón	1/90
Yareli Arizmendi	2/90-6/90
Juan Carlos Toth	8/90
Susan Yamagata	8/90
Graciela Ovejero	9/90-3/91
Edgardo Reynoso	11/91

BAW/TAF

Border Art Workshop/Taller de Arte Fronterizo

GENERAL STATEMENT: BAW/TAF, since its inception in 1984, has been the active visual arm of the Centro Cultural de la Raza. Its founding members were: David Avalos, Victor Ochoa, Isaac Artenstein, Jude Eberhart, Sara-Jo Berman, Guillermo Gomez-Peña, and Michael Schnorr. During the past seven years, a number of artists have joined and left the group. BAW/TAF continues to exist as a collective of artists with a voice of multiple strengths. The purpose of BAW/TAF remains the same as it has since its beginning: we are a multi-national conduit that serves to address the issues we are confronted with while existing in a region where two countries and cultures meet. This history covers works conceived of collectively and produced through collaborative processes.

WORKSHOP HISTORY

FORMATION June to October, 1984.

BAW/TAF is organized by David Avalos under the sponsorship of the Centro Cultural de la Raza, San Diego, California.

BORDER REALITIES, February, 1985, Galeria de la Raza, San Francisco, California.

A multi-media art event including an outdoor mural, video, sculpture, painting, photography, and performance art within the gallery installation. OCNOCENI. Performed by Guillermo Gómez-Peña and Sara Jo Berman.

BORDER TABLEAU, November 1985. Border Field Park, U.S.-Mexico border.

A tableau vivant created for photographer Jay Dusard for inclusion in a book by him and journalist, Alan Weisman. *La Frontera: The United States Border with Mexico* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc., 1986) photo: plate 54, text: pp. 179-181.

A TRI-CULTURAL STREET EVENT, January, 1986, Sushi, Inc., San Diego, California.

A performance within a light and sculpture installation created on the street in front of the gallery.

BORDER REALITIES II, February, 1986, Centro Cultural de la Raza, San Diego, California.

A series of installations occupying 2000 square feet and utilizing light, graphics, sculpture, painting, slide projection and video. Gallery visitors were encouraged to write on the walls, lift boulders, climb on sculpture and interact with the installations in a variety of other ways. Performance art presentations occurred at the opening and closing of the exhibition. *CABARET BABYLON-AZTLAN*. Performed by Guillermo Gómez-Peña and Sara Jo Berman in the format of a Tijuana Cabaret.

END OF THE LINE, October 12, 1986, Centro Cultural de la Raza, San Diego, California.

A site-specific performance/installation/event which took place at the end of the border fence where Tijuana and San Diego meet at the Pacific Ocean. An attempt by artists and audience on both sides of the border to discover America on their own terms. The piece occurred simultaneously in the United States and Mexico and was intended to create a sense of "no border." As a challenge to the media concept of the border as a "war zone," the piece established the possibility of a space for creativity and peaceful interaction.

CAFE URGENTE, October 16, 1986, Centro Cultural de la Raza, San Diego, California.

A cafe environment was created within a sculpture and light installation forming a context for the presentation of performance and ideas by U.S. and Mexican humanities scholars and writers (Tomas Ybarra-Frausto, Ph.D., James D. Cockroft, Ph.D., Alan Weisman, Felipe Ehrenberg, David Maciel, Ph.D., and BAW/TAF members. Over bottles of beer and cups of coffee the audience and presenters discussed border consciousness, the redefinition of the border, and new models for its future unfolding.

BORDER REALITIES III, February, 1987, Centro Cultural de la Raza, San Diego, California.

BAW/TAF's third annual art exhibition including installations, sculpture, performance, painting, drawing, photo/texts and documentation of "End of the Line." *DOCUMENTED/UNDOCUMENTED*. Co-written and performed by Guillermo Gómez-Peña and Emily Hicks.

911 - A HOUSE GONE WRONG, April, 1987, La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, Parameters 8, San Diego, California.

Co-sponsored by the Centro Cultural de la Raza. Primarily an installation utilizing wall painting, sculpture, light and sound. Two different presentations of performance art occurred during the three-month length of the exhibition.

PARAMETERS 8 COFFEE/DISCUSSIONS, April-June, 1987, Java Coffee House and Gallery, San Diego, California.

Four informal panel discussions hosted by BAW/TAF and held in conjunction with "911." Panelists included Tijuana publisher Rosina Conde, THE TRIBUNE editorial page editor Joe Holley, Chicano activist Herman Baca, Pulitzer Prize winner Jonathan Freedman, Mexican researcher Jose Luis Perez Canchola, Director of the Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias Paul Ganster, and art critics Susan Freudenheim, Leah Ollman and Robert Pincus.

IS THE BORDER IN YOUR MIND, ON THE GROUND OR IN THE MEDIA, April 14, 1987, Society for Photographic Education, 24th National Conference, San Diego, California.

A collaborative, interdisciplinary 30-minute event. A critique of mass media images of the border utilizing audio-taped sequences, choreography, slides, live performance, original "rap" song and sculpture sets.

BORDER PILGRIMAGE, November 1, 1987, Tijuana/San Diego.

Around the day of the Dead, a group of experimental Mexican, Chicano, and Anglo artists gathered at the municipal cemetery in Tijuana around the tomb of Juan Soldado, patron saint of Chicanos and the undocumented. Their objective was to cross legally or illegally, under real or fictitious identities, and document the journey with video, sound, photographs, drawings, and poetry, and at the same time, to collect objects and images for the later construction of an altar for the dead commemorating the event.

BORDER REALITIES IV, CASA DE CAMBIO, Spring, 1988, Centro Cultural de la Raza, San Diego, California.

This exhibition included the collaboration of 20 artists from the San Diego-Tijuana region in a large, interdisciplinary art exhibit. The exhibition was conceptually integrated around the potential for a labyrinth or maze to disorient an audience. Coupled with a variety of installation approaches, the aim of the exhibition was the transformation of the viewer on an internal and intellectual level. The video "Erasing the Line: Backyard to Backyard" was featured in one of the installations as was "Border Brujo" by Guillermo Gomez Peña.

#95, 1988, San Diego, California. In collaboration with the Sierra Club, members of the workshop including Berta Jottar, Robert Sanchez, and Richard Lou designed this performance which deals with Coastal Border Ecology and oil drilling.

VIDAS PERDIDAS/LOST LIVES, January, 1989, Artists Space, New York, New York.

BAW/TAF in this multi-media exhibition, will be the medium, the organ of delineation of the undocumented worker, so they may define their own lives as well as their own deaths. The installation invited people to walk from the dangerous border freeway crossings to the poisonous north county San Diego flower fields and forced plantation reality of the region's undocumented workers.

SUPER BARRIO, March 7, 1989, Centro Cultural de la Raza, San Diego, California.

A BAW/TAF performance collaborating with Super Barrio (the Mexican folk-social activist hero). A mock wrestling match against the Borderlords and an informational presentation on human rights violations in San Diego's north county.

BORDER REALITIES V, June, 1989, Centro Cultural de la Raza, San Diego, California.

The sequential collaboration and the exchange of social-cultural dialogues at a binational level has placed BAW/TAF in a position to widen the perspective, and the ability to examine how issues and concerns that affect regional borders interconnect within the global multinational border context. This interdisciplinary exhibition reflects concepts of a global border reachout. As the interconnectedness of border regions becomes more apparent, we can expose the spiritual groveling caused by divisibility and negation.

HIGHWAYS OPENING BENEFIT - CINCO DE MAYO, May 5, 1989, Santa Monica, California.

BAW/TAF and friends from Los Angeles, San Francisco and Tijuana help to inaugurate the Highways Performance Space with a series of performances and street events, culminating in a community procession through the neighborhood ending in the Pantera Rosa bar. The aim was to ceremonially reclaim the area, one of the oldest barrios in the region, as part of Aztlan.

CAPP STREET PROJECT-BORDER AXES, July-August, 1989, San Francisco, California.

BAW/TAF was instrumental in the creation of an ALTERNATIVE NEWS MEDIA NETWORK BY ARTISTS, a functional, temporal network of gathering, archiving, analysis and dissemination. We have a sense of urgency about breaking out of the art circuit and enlarging the definition of the artist to embrace communicator/disseminator of ideas/images. We want: a) to make the information accessible to a broader, more multi-cultural audience; and b) to document the audience's response to our analysis and presentations.

BAW/TAF IN THE SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS, 1989, A series of elementary and high school workshops with students exploring issues of AIDS, identity and cultural awareness.

IF YOU LIVED HERE, The City in Art, Theory and Social Activism, 1989, Dia Art Foundation, New York, New York.
Group exhibition presenting the current crisis in American urban housing policies and portraying how artists within the context of neighborhood organizations have fought against government neglect, shortsighted housing policies, and real estate speculation. "NO PLACE TO CALL HOME" (Video art, USA, color, 20 mins, 3/4 inch, English and Spanish). An altered documentary of the conditions and final eviction of many documented and undocumented workers in north San Diego county for lack of adequate housing and unfettered real estate speculation.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE? September, 1989, San Francisco Arts Commission Gallery, San Francisco, California.
A group exhibition, panel and roundtable discussion on issues of censorship and self-censorship from the viewpoints of artists, political figures, arts administrators and historians, business, law, and religious experts.

SOCCER FIELD/CAÑON ZAPATA PERFORMANCE INTERVENTIONS, October, 1989 - February, 1990, San Diego/Tijuana.
A series of performance interventions on the international boundary line between California, U.S., and Baja California, Mexico, taking place on game board designs and asking for participation by local people and those waiting to cross into the U.S. The interventions were meant to question ideas of place, boundary, colonization, and the 'media image' of the area as a 'war zone.'

BORDER WATCH I, January 1990, Soccer Field/Cañon Zapata - Galeria de la Raza, San Francisco, California.
The first presentation of the Soccer Field/Cañon Zapata performance interventions in exhibition installation format with Sony Face-to-Face telephone machines connecting San Diego with the Galleria. Street projections of border performances and crossings extended the exhibition outside the gallery space.

COUNTER PROTEST TO "LIGHT UP THE BORDER," March, 1990, Nestor, California.
A site-specific performance intervention with more than 100 participants carrying mirrors to reflect the lights and ignorance of the Light Up the Border demonstrators. BAW/TAF organized citizen and student groups in order to expand the experience of performance intervention within a populist political action.

EL BORDO, Spring, 1990, Tijuana, Mexico.
A series of site-specific performance intervention actions co-ordinated with and initiated by Tijuana artists in order to raise the visibility of U.S. Border Patrol activities and those of the Light Up the Border groups.

VENICE BIENNALE, April, 1990, APERTO '90, Colon Colonizado, Venice, Italy.
International invitational multimedia installation focusing on the series of performance interventions directly on the US/Mexico border dealing with issues of colonialism (*Columbus Reconsidered*), international boundaries (*Berlin Posada*), the Invasion of Panama (*Oh George! Oh Panama!*) and the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (*Roll My Dice With a Lucky Hand, I Want to Own a Lot of Land*).

LIVING ON THE BORDER: ART AND ACTIVISM, SAN DIEGO & TIJUANA, June, 1990, Lancaster Festival, Ohio.
The Venice Biennale APERTO '90 installation installed in Ohio.

BORDER SUTURES, July-August, 1990, Southwestern United States.
Performance journey from Matamoros/Brownsville to San Diego/Tijuana, during which participants made a variety of staples which attempted to heal the wound of the border and involved people along the line. The one-month interactive traveling art caravan traveled both sides of the border in zig-zag fashion to symbolically mend the wound. Border crossing points of entry and non-traditional art sites made up a majority of the stopping points and established new networks of communication between BAW/TAF members and native Americans, Mexicans, and North Americans.

BORDER WATCH II, September, 1990, CIRCA, University of Texas, Arlington, Texas.
A second version of the Venice Biennale Aperto '90 installation with a live video transmission from the Soccer Field/Cañon Zapata in San Diego/Tijuana of a performance intervention entitled Border Tug of War following the performance intervention format developed in late 1989 at the Soccer Field/Cañon Zapata.

ORFANATORIO LAZARO CARDENAS, December, 1990, Tijuana, Mexico.
Collaborative mural project with students from Southwestern College and Tijuana for the infant's hall in the orphanage. This was the first attempt of an ongoing project dealing with the lives of children made homeless, either existing on the streets or in institutions, a situation analogous to the lives of many undocumented workers.

WHITEWASH(ED), April, 1991, Centro Cultural de la Raza, San Diego, California.
BAW/TAF annual exhibition (BORDER REALITIES VI) including over 20 artists from Tijuana, San Diego, and London, England. This exhibit explored a wide range of interpretations of racism on physical and psychic borders, issues of identity and place, the rise of vigilantism against undocumented workers in our community, and our unconscious denials of these realities.

WHITEWASH(ED) PORTABLE EXHIBITION, May, 1991, LACE (Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions), San Diego, California.
A portable exhibition in conjunction with WHITEWASH(ED) that travelled to four San Diego area high schools and challenged students to confront their involvement in the institutionalization of racism, the need for creative self expression, how patterns of behavior become distorted, and the creation of attitudes which acknowledge our diversity.

SOUTH=NORTH=SOUTH, July-August 1991, Hallwalls, Buffalo, New York.
From July 17 through August 19, BAW/TAF was in residence in recognition of the fact that borderland cultural multiplicity is coming increasingly to describe not only border towns like San Diego/Tijuana or Buffalo, but the entire United States. BAW/TAF's activities in Western New York included two weeks of interaction with migrant farmworkers and their families followed by two weeks of community/ art based activities in Buffalo which included music, performance, visual art exhibition and community discussion.

1992: CONQUESTS DO NOT BELONG ONLY TO THE PAST, November-December, 1991, INTAR, New York, New York.
BAW/TAF offers a portion of a large travelling slide exhibition, focusing of some aspects of the current expressions of colonialism. The slides are projected onto an outside wall at night in downtown New York City. They work visually to be quickly read, including historical reference to conquest, as well as imagery which infuses humor into an often grave situation, with imagery which points to sexism, racism, and the objectification of human beings.

DESTINATION L.A., December, 1991, LACE (Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions), Los Angeles, California.
An interdisciplinary installation and performance which is concerned with the fact of Los Angeles as a destination for migrating people and undocumented workers. Regional, national and international issues of migration, immigration, dislocation, and the hidden histories of people undergoing these experiences from the US/Mexico border to L.A. will be explored. Obstacles to the destination and resources employed to overcome them will be examined in order to develop a human mapping, a topography of a section of Los Angeles.

1992-1993

THE FOURTH WORLD: MIGRANT PEOPLES/ MOVING STORIES, 1992, Centro Cultural de la Raza, San Diego, CA.

SYDNEY BIENNALE: BOUNDARY RIDERS, 1992-93, International Exhibition of Art, Sydney, Australia.

VIDEO WORKS

SOUTH=NORTH=SOUTH, 3/4 inch color video, 1991, English and Spanish. Shot and Edited by Bill Jungels. Co-produced by BAW/TAF and the Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center, Buffalo, NY. A documentation and exploration of BAW/TAF's month long residency at the Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center. Several weeks of activity included: conducting classes in cooperation with elementary schools in various migrant districts, visits to migrant workers and their families both at home and in the fields, interviews, stories, performances and celebrations.

Destination L.A. - #1 Columbus Reconsidered; #2 Berlin Posada; #3 Oh George! Oh Panama!; #4 Guadalupe Hidalgo/Roll My Dice With a Lucky Hand, I Wanna Own a Lot of Land. 3/4 inch color video, 1989-90, English and Spanish. Shot and Edited by Juan Carlos Toth. Performance interventions by Michael Schnorr and Richard Lou from the Canyon Emiliano Zapata on the U.S./Mexico border.

No Place to Call Home: Migrant Workers are the New Homeless, San Diego, CA, 3/4 inch color video, 1989, English and Spanish. By Bertha Jottar, Michael Schnorr and Juan Carlos Toth. The creation of a new class of homeless by the city of San Diego.

Backyard to Backyard: Erasing the Line, 3/4 inch color video, 1988, English and Spanish. By Bertha Jottar and Michael Schnorr from an original concept by Michael Schnorr. An analysis of news media coverage of the Tijuana/San Diego border through the eyes and voices of those that live along its boundary.

Border Realities, 3/4 inch color video, 1986, English and Spanish. Produced and Directed by Michael Schnorr and Isaac Arstenstein. Co-produced by the Southwestern College Telemedia Department. A potpourri of border images meant to renew our perspectives on contemporary Mexico/U.S. border issues.

R. SMILEY
TIMMONS
WALKER



Badge of United States Customs Inspector Deputy Collector, 1895, hand made from Mexican coin.
[SAN DIEGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS]



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